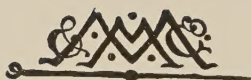




THE POETICAL WORKS
OF
CHRISTINA GEORGINA ROSSETTI





THE POETICAL WORKS
OF
CHRISTINA GEORGINA
ROSSETTI

WITH MEMOIR AND NOTES &c
BY
WILLIAM MICHAEL ROSSETTI

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PREFACE

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI'S first published poetic volume, which had been preceded by some poems issued in a more scattered shape, was produced in 1862; she died in 1894. It seems now to be time that her Poetical Works should be brought out in a duly co-ordinated form, practically (though not in the most absolute possible sense) complete.

Her poetic volumes appeared as follows:—

1. *Verses*, privately printed, 1847. This volume has been reissued to the public at a recent date, but without any authority obtained, nor I suppose legally needed, from the representatives of the writer.

2. *Goblin Market and other Poems*, 1862 (Macmillan).

3. *The Prince's Progress and other Poems*, 1866 (Macmillan).

4. *Sing-Song*, 1872 (Routledge, now Macmillan).

5. *A Pageant and other Poems*, 1881 (Macmillan). The volumes 2, 3, and 5, have been reissued in a collected form, introducing a moderate number of additional poems.

6. *Verses*, 1893 (Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge). These poems are reprinted in the volume here named from three earlier volumes of combined prose and verse.

7. *New Poems*, 1896 (Macmillan). Collected and edited by myself after Christina's death.

From this list it will be seen that the Firm of Macmillan & Co., Limited, has now and heretofore been in a position to deal with all Christina Rossetti's poems, except only the *Verses*, 1893, No. 6 on the list. Those *Verses* include many of the finest devotional poems that she ever wrote; and to bring out, without including these, an edition of her poems professedly or proximately complete, would have been a fallacious attempt. By an arrangement made with the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, we are enabled to include the *Verses* in the present edition.

The division of my sister's writings in this edition runs thus: The Longer Poems, Juvenilia, Devotional Poems, General Poems, Poems for Children and Minor Verse, and Italian Poems. Each of these sections is arranged in order of date, so far as the conditions (as to which some details are given in my Notes) reasonably allow. I think that readers already interested in Christina Rossetti's poetry will find some pleasure in tracing the sequence of dates. They will learn that some of her best poems were written at a very early period of her youth. Her own arrangement of her poems in the latest collected edition (which, as already indicated, includes only the volumes that I have numbered 2, 3, and 5, and not the other four volumes) may also be regarded as a point of some interest; I give that Table of Contents in an Appendix (A). That her arrangement in all instances was not merely haphazard may be taken for granted—she consulted her brother Dante Gabriel a good deal, with regard at any rate to No. 3; at the same time, I do not perceive that any very definite plan has been followed in the latest collected edition. One clear distinction is made—that of separating the poems which first appeared in vol. 5 from those which are proper to vols. 2 and 3; the contents of 2 and 3 are fused together without any regard to dates of composition or of first publication, and perhaps even with some inclination to keep this point in a haze.

As to the few Italian poems, I have had before now occasion to remark that they appear to me to be in essentials as good as those in English, although I could readily suppose that in some points of diction, etc. they are not up to the standard of verse written by a native Italian. Later on I was somewhat surprised to find, in an Italian literary paper named *Il Marzocco*, a criticism expressed in the following very adverse terms: 'She wrote also some Italian verses; but, if I am to judge of them from the specimens I know, they not only do not add anything to her fame as a poet, but rather detract from it, so formless and inept do they seem to me. It might almost be thought that the writer of those verses did not, as we know she did, speak from early childhood her paternal language.' This criticism is signed 'Th. Neal,' an English-seeming name which is used (as I have been informed) by an Italian writer. I quote the observation for whatever it may be worth, and for candour's sake, but can hardly help thinking that it must be harsher than the circumstances warrant. Recently I have had occasion to converse with a literary Italian, well versed in English: he considers that Christina's Italian

verses are not undeserving of commendation, and assimilate to native work more nearly than those of Dante Gabriel Rossetti.

With regard to the volume above-mentioned entitled *New Poems*, which I edited in 1896 after my sister's death, it has been alleged by some critics that I raked together all that I could find, however indifferent in several instances, and presented all to the public, who would gladly have dispensed with many. As a statement of fact, I know this to be incorrect; and, as a matter of opinion, I consider it mistaken. So far from raking together all that I could find, I left unused a considerable number of compositions that were at my disposal; and in the present edition I still leave these unused. I add in an Appendix (B) a list of them; this is perhaps not of much concern to any one, but it serves to confirm my assertion, and may be regarded with favour by some future editor, who might really be minded to carry to its utmost limit the 'raking-together' process. And I will not pretend to deny that, in the case of a writer who has attained a certain standard (it must be a high one) of fame and popularity, I consider that that process has a good deal to say for itself.

The contents of the volume named *New Poems* are of course reproduced, in their due order of date, etc., in the present edition. In prefacing that volume I made the remark: 'I conceive *some* of the compositions herein contained to be up to the level of Christina Rossetti's best work,¹ and the great majority of them to be well up to her average.' This is an opinion which I still entertain, although aware that several critics of the *New Poems* formed and expressed a very different judgment. They seemed to find little to commend in the volume, and much to object to, both in the poems themselves and in my action as their editor. Those critics and I must apparently agree to differ as to the general ratio of

¹ It is possible that some readers might like to know which are the compositions here referred to. I will therefore give a list of them (which follows the order of their pagination in the *New Poems*, not in the present edition). They are twenty-six in number, viz., *The Summer is Ended*, *A Pause*, *Restive* (which is now reprinted as Section 3 of *Three Stages*), *Long Looked for*, *Let Patience have her Perfect Work*, *In an Artist's Studio*, *Meeting* (if we shall live, we live), *Under Willows*, *A Sketch*, *If I had Words*, *Now They Desire*, *Not Yours but You*, *By the Waters of Babylon*, *Birds of Paradise*, *Il Rosseggiar dell'Oriente*; and (more especially) *A Soul*, *Cobwebs*, *A Chilly Night*, *Acme*, *Introspective*, *To-day and To-morrow*, *En Route*, *By Way of Remembrance*, *Sleeping at Last*, *There remaineth therefore a Rest for the People of God* (Come, blessed sleep, most full, most perfect, come), and *The Heart knoweth its own Bitterness* (When all the over-work of life).

merit in the *New Poems*, and as to the question whether an editor is justified in publishing, after the death of the writer, compositions which had remained unpublished during the lifetime of the latter. I myself apprehend that (both in the case of my sister and of other writers) there may have been a variety of reasons why poems did not get published in their lifetime, which reasons do not continue to operate posthumously to any valid extent; and that the person who comes into possession of the poems of the deceased has a full right—amounting in some instances almost to a duty—to publish what he considers to be good enough for the purpose, and to be unexceptionable on other grounds.

In the volume *New Poems* there were some slight or out-of-the-way items—such as *Bouts-rimés Sonnets*, *An Alphabet for Children*, etc.—which, according to the plan of that book, were mixed up with poems of a more serious and artistic kind. In the present volume I have coupled those items, under the name of ‘Minor Verse,’ with the Poems for Children, and have thus, I hope, removed any substantial objection to their inclusion.

I may glance here at a point of typography in the present volume—a point which, although small, is not wholly trivial. The system followed as to the indenting of lines, so as to mark metre and rhyming, is far from uniform. In some instances no indenting whatever appears; in others it is consistently, in others again only partially, carried out. The discrepancy affects chiefly, on the one hand, those poems which were published by Christina herself, and, on the other hand, those which I put together in the *New Poems*—my preference being for a fully applied process of indenting. This process is more difficult of application to Christina’s compositions than to most others, owing to the exceptional degree of latitude which she allowed herself in varying (and I think very generally with fine rhythmical effect) the number of feet in one and the same piece. Thus the marking of the length of lines by indenting would frequently conflict with a similar marking of the rhymes. When I had to deal with the proofs of the present volume I found that to attempt to make the scheme of indenting uniform throughout would involve an amount of trouble to the Printers as well as myself which seemed out of proportion to any contingent advantage: therefore, though somewhat reluctantly, I have left the indenting (or non-indenting) to reappear in much the same form as in the original volumes from which the present one is compiled.

The poems of Christina Rossetti are marked by certain key-notes of feeling which, although they could not be allowed to govern the arrange-

ment of the compositions in this edition, deserve to be borne in mind by her readers; and among the readers there may be some who would like to be furnished with a clue for following out, as the inclination prompts them at the moment, one or other of these trains of sentiment. It may perhaps be said that the two ideas most prevalent of all are the strenuous and onerous effort to attain to the salvation of the soul in heaven, and the ardent absorbing devotion to the work and the very person of the Saviour Jesus Christ. These ideas are diffused over the whole area of the authoress's Devotional Poems, and are to be traced in other compositions as well. It would, I think, be superfluous to call attention to particular poems embodying those paramount ideas, and I therefore limit myself to other ideas, subordinate, yet still marked and dominant,—some of them of much importance in themselves, others not thus important but highly characteristic of Christina Rossetti. I will define them thus: (1) Personal Experiences and Emotions; (2) Death; (3) The Aspiration for Rest (and her ideal of bliss appears to have consisted in ultimate rest, only less absolutely than in the promised fruition of heaven); (4) Vanity of Vanities; (5) A Love of Animals, and more especially such animals as are frequently regarded as odd or uncouth, rather than obviously attractive; (6) Winter—almost invariably contemplated as dismal and repugnant; (7) The loveliness of the Rose. In the Appendix (C) I give a reference to the principal instances (not by any means to all instances) in which these themes are prominently brought forward.

In my Notes at the end of the volume many details will be found bearing upon the occasions which gave rise to particular poems, the significance of the poems, etc. For such compositions as appeared in the volume of *New Poems* the Notes appended to that volume are here re-used, with modifications and omissions.

Brief though the foregoing remarks are, they may perhaps serve as being all that I need personally say about the Poems of my Sister. To puff them is neither my business nor my inclination. To analyse them in any painstaking manner is outside my editorial scope—many of them in fact have already sunk deep into the feelings and the memory, and I might say the conscience, of poetic readers. I think it well, however, to add to my Preface a condensed Memoir of Christina Rossetti. Up to the date of her death little was publicly known about her, as she had led an extremely quiet and even a secluded life. Since then the Biography by my friend, Mr. Mackenzie Bell, has appeared—January 1898. When that work came

out some very erroneous opinions were expressed about it in the press—not of course in all the critiques, but in two or three of the most influential. The view thus propounded, and propounded in a very confident tone, was that I had been a main performer in Mr. Bell's book: the voice might be the voice of Jacob, but the hands were the hands of Esau. The critics must permit me to tell them that this was totally untrue. Their semi-omniscience was at fault. The simple facts of the case are as follows:—Mr. Bell, soon after Christina's death, formed the project of writing a biographical and critical study of her. As he had known nothing personally of Christina except during some thirteen months preceding her death, he was necessarily aware that his biographical materials must be obtained from some one else; and he very correctly opined that I knew much more about her than any other person living, and that therefore it would be expedient to apply to me for a large majority of his information. He asked whether I would furnish such information, and I said yes; and in the course of his work he addressed to me a great number of questions, mostly in writing, to which I replied, also mostly in writing. At one stage of the matter I put it very plainly to Mr. Bell that, while I was happy to return a direct and full reply to most of his inquiries, I neither expected nor intended to regulate in any way the use he might make of my answers; and on this plan I acted throughout, except that in some very few instances I found, when he sent me the proofs of his book, that he had reproduced in my own off-hand terms some details (generally affecting outsiders) which I thought not fitted to be published in the same terms. These few instances I pointed out to Mr. Bell, and he, with the right feeling which invariably marked his treatment of such matters, at once conformed to my views. I observed in the proofs a great number of other instances in which he had quoted my precise phrases. In several of these cases my opinion was that it would have been better, on literary or other grounds, if he had simply worked up into his own narrative the facts which I placed at his disposal (without quoting my precise words, or even naming me as the informant), or if he had merely utilized my details so far as tacitly to avoid making any mis-statement: but, faithful to my view that the book ought to be his in the fullest sense, and in no sense mine, I advisedly abstained from raising any objection or demur on this point. The critics to whom I have referred, while treating Mr. Bell and his book with some favour in the comparative if not the positive degree, fell foul of me in something not unlike the superlative degree—and this mainly on the ground,

erroneously imagined by themselves, that most of the things which they disliked in the book had been foisted into it by me in a spirit of dictation at once arrogant and obtuse, and had by Mr. Bell been too tamely permitted to appear. Both Mr. Bell and I had reason to complain of these critics: Mr. Bell for being falsely credited with a degree of sheepish acquiescence which had tended to spoil his book, and I for being falsely arraigned of an offence not enacted by me but invented by my censors, who thereupon abused me for doing what I had not done, and for defects of mind and character evidenced by the imputed doing of it.

But all this is an old story, and barely worth referring to now. I glance at it chiefly because it has constituted one of my reasons for preferring on the present occasion to write something—a very little—about my sister in the way of biography. Mr. Bell's treatment of the subject is in many respects meritorious, but need not prevent a relative from stating a few facts in his own way. A reader of the poems ought to know who and what their authoress was. I propose to put him in possession of that amount of knowledge, and of little beyond that.

W. M. ROSSETTI.

LONDON, *September* 1903.

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The under-mentioned poems were printed (not published) in the *Verses* (1847):—

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The under-mentioned were first published since Christina Rossetti's death, December 1894:—

Nos. 4, 18, 19, 21, 22, 31, 41, 55, 56, 58, 59, 61, 62, 65, 67 to 73, 76, 77, 78, 172, 175, 176, 177, 179 to 186, 189, 259, 261, 263, 264, 265, 267, 269 to 272, 278, 313, 314, 347, 348, 401, 402, 403, 406, 407, 413, 414, 500, 521, 523, 524, 526, 527, 528, 532, 533, 539, 540, 543 to 547, 549 to 554, 556 to 565, 568 to 576, 579, 580, 581, 586, 587, 588, 590, 591, 592, 594 to 601, 607, 610, 613, 614, 616, 626, 628, 634, 641, 643, 644, 645, 649, 650, 655, 657, 659, 668, 669, 672, 673, 676, 685, 689, 695 to 699, 702, 710, 711, 716 to 726, 731, 767, 776, 778 to 782, 786, 789, 791, 793, 922, 925, 938 to 996.

The under-mentioned are now for the first time published:—

Nos. 27, 423, 604, 785, 788, 820, 827, 859, 873, 877, 927, 934.

All other poems, not above enumerated, were issued during the authoress's lifetime, whether in volumes or otherwise—very generally in volumes.

APPENDIX

A.—CONTENTS OF THE COLLECTED EDITION ISSUED BY CHRISTINA ROSSETTI

THE FIRST SERIES

Goblin Market.
The Prince's Progress.
Maiden-Song.
Dream Land.
At Home.
The Poor Ghost.
Grown and Flown.
A Farm Walk.
A Portrait.
By the Sea.
Gone for ever.
Love from the North.
Maggie a Lady.
From Sunset to Star Rise.
Spring Quiet.
Winter Rain.
Vanity of Vanities.
Days of Vanity.
The Ghost's Petition.
Once for all.
Enrica, 1865.
A Chill.
Somewhere or Other.
Noble Sisters.
Jessie Cameron.
Spring.
Summer.
Autumn.
Winter : My Secret.
Autumn Violets.
A Dirge.

A Bird's-eye View.
Fata Morgana.
Memory.
'They desire a Better Country.'
Child's Talk in April.
A Green Cornfield.
The Lambs of Grasmere, 1860.
A Birthday.
A Bride Song.
Confluents.
Remember.
After Death.
The Lowest Room.
Dream-Love.
An End.
Dead Hope.
Twice.
My Dream.
Songs in a Cornfield.
On the Wing.
L. E. L.
Song.
The Hour and the Ghost.
Shall I forget.
Life and Death.
A Summer Wish.
A Year's Windfalls.
An Apple-Gathering.
Song.
Maude Clare.
Echo.
Another Spring.
Bird or Beast.

Eve.
 A Daughter of Eve.
 A Peal of Bells.
 The Bourne.
 Song.
 Venus's Looking-Glass.
 Love Lies Bleeding.
 Bird Raptures.
 The Queen of Hearts.
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 Beauty is Vain.
 May.
 A Pause of Thought.
 Twilight Calm.
 Wife to Husband.
 Three Seasons.
 Mirage.
 A Royal Princess.
 My Friend.
 Shut Out.
 Sound Sleep.
 Song.
 Song.
 Dead before Death.
 Twilight Night.
 Bitter for Sweet.
 What would I give?
 The First Spring Day.
 A Bird Song.
 A Smile and a Sigh.
 One Day.
 Rest.
 The Convent Threshold.
 Amor Mundi.
 Up-Hill.
 'The Iniquity of the Fathers upon the
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 In the Round Tower at Jhansi.
 'Thy Brother's Blood crieth.'
 'To-day for Me.'
 A Christmas Carol.
 'The Love of Christ which passeth
 Knowledge.'
 'A Bruised Reed shall He not break.'
 Long Barren.
 Despised and Rejected.
 A Better Resurrection.
 If Only.
 Advent.
 The Three Enemies.
 Consider.

Dost Thou not care?
 Weary in Well-doing.
 One Certainty.
 By the Waters of Babylon.
 Christian and Jew.
 Good Friday.
 Sweet Death.
 Symbols.
 'Consider the Lilies of the Field.'
 The World.
 A Testimony.
 Paradise.
 Sleep at Sea.
 Mother Country.
 'I will lift up mine Eyes unto the Hills.'
 'The Master is come, and calleth for
 Thee.'
 Who shall deliver me?
 'When my Heart is vexed, I will com-
 plain.'
 After Communion.
 Martyrs' Song.
 After this the Judgment.
 Saints and Angels.
 A Rose Plant in Jericho.
 From House to Home.
 Old and New Year Ditties.
 Amen.
 The Lowest Place.

THE SECOND SERIES

The Key-Note.
 The Months : A Pageant.
 Pastime.
 'Italia, io ti saluto !'
 Mirrors of Life and Death.
 Birchington Churchyard.
 A Ballad of Boding.
 Yet a little while.
 He and She.
 Monna Innominata.
 'Luscious and Sorrowful.'
 One Sea-side Grave.
 De Profundis.
 Tempus Fugit.
 Golden Glories.
 Johnny.
 Brother Bruin.
 'Hollow-sounding and Mysterious.'

A Helpmeet for him.
 Maiden May.
 Till To-morrow.
 Death-Watches.
 Touching 'Never.'
 Brandons both.
 A Life's Parallels.
 At Last.
 Golden Silences.
 In the Willow Shade.
 Fluttered Wings.
 A Fisher-Wife.
 What's in a Name?
 Mariana.
 Memento Mori.
 'One Foot on Sea, and one on Shore.'
 A Song of Flight.
 Buds and Babies.
 A Wintry Sonnet.
 Boy Johnny.
 Freaks of Fashion.
 An October Garden.
 'Summer is ended.'
 Passing and Glassing.
 'I will arise.'
 Resurgam.
 A Prodigal Son.
 Sœur Louise de la Miséricorde.

To-day's Burden.
 An 'immurata' Sister.
 'There is a budding Morrow in Mid-
 night.'
 'If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not.'
 The Thread of Life.
 An Old-World Thicket.
 Exultate Deo.
 'All Thy Works praise Thee, O Lord.'
 Later Life.
 'For Thine own Sake, O my God.'
 Until the Day Break.
 A Hope Carol.
 'Of him that was ready to perish.'
 Christmas Carols.
 A Candlemas Dialogue.
 'Behold the Man!'
 The Descent from the Cross.
 Mary Magdalene and the other Mary.
 'It is Finished.'
 An Easter Carol.
 'Behold a shaking.'
 All Saints.
 'Take care of Him.'
 Patience of Hope.
 A Martyr.
 Why?
 'Love is strong as Death.'

B.—POEMS BY CHRISTINA ROSSETTI, EXTANT IN MS.
 (A FEW IN PRINT ALSO), BUT NOT USED IN THE
 PRESENT EDITION, NOR IN THE NEW POEMS PRINTED
 IN 1896.

	<i>Date.</i>
1. Heaven	1842
2. Corydon's Lament and Resolution	1843
3. Rosalind	"
4. The Water-spirit's Song (an extract from this appears in Mr. Mac- kenzie Bell's book)	1844
5. Pitia a Damone	"
6. The Faithless Shepherdess	"
7. Ariadne to Theseus	"
8. A Hymn for Christmas Day	"
9. Love and Death	"
10. Despair	"
11. Easter Morning	"
12. Song (The faith of years is broken)	"

	<i>Date.</i>
13. A Tirsi	1845
14. The Last Words of St. Telemachus	"
15. Lord Thomas and Fair Margaret	"
16. Charade [on the word 'Sonnet']	"
17. Hope in Grief	"
18. The Rose	1846
19. On Lady Isabella	"
20. Divine and Human Pleading	"
21. The Ruined Cross	"
22. Amore e Dispetto	"
23. Sappho	"
24. Song (I saw her, she was lovely)	"
25. The Last Words of Sir Eustace Grey	"
26. Eva	"
27. Young men aye were fickle found	1847
28. A Counsel	"
29. One of the Dead	"
30. The Trees' Counselling	"
31. O Death, where is thy Sting	1847 or 1848
32. Peter the Hermit's Benediction	"
33. Undine	1848
34. Floral Teaching	"
35. Death	"
36. Nydia	"
37. Ellen Middleton	"
38. St. Andrew's Church	"
39. Grown Cold	"
40. Zara (The pale sad face of her I wronged)	"
41. Sleep, sleep	"
42. What Sappho would have said, had her leap cured instead of killing her	"
43. Ten Bouts-rimés Sonnets	1848-49

They begin with the following lines :—(1) Listen, and I will tell you of a face ; (2) Strange voices sing among the planets which ; (3) From early dawn until the flush of noon ; (4) Surely there is an aching void within ; (5) The spring is come again, not as at first ; (6) You who look on past ages as a glass ; (7) Who shall my wandering thoughts steady and fix ; (8) Along the highroad the way is too long ; (9) O thou who tell'st me that all hope is over ; (10) O glorious sea that in each climbing wave.

44. Sonnet (Some say that love and joy are one, and so)	1849
45. The Last Complaint	"
46. Have you Forgotten ?	"
47. A Year Afterwards	"
48. Charade (On the name Ægisthus)	"
49. A Dream (Oh for my love, my only love)	1851
50. Song (I have loved you for long long years, Ellen)	1852
51. Let them rejoice in their Beds	1853
52. Like as we are (MS. incomplete)	"
53. All night I dream you love me well	"

	<i>Date.</i>
54. Epitaph	1853
55. Our Heaven	1854
56. Guesses	"
57. Zara (I dreamed that loving me he would love on)	1855
58. An Answer (MS. incomplete)	1856
59. The Massacre of Perugia (MS. incomplete)	1859
60. Verses on a Picnic near Sunderland	"
61. Verses to W. B. Scott (dos-à-dos)	1866

C.—SOME LEADING THEMES, OR KEY-NOTES OF FEELING, IN THE POEMS OF CHRISTINA ROSSETTI

1. *Personal Experiences and Emotions.*—From House to Home—A Pageant (p. 54)—Monna Innominata—An Old-World Thicket (p. 65)—Later Life, Nos. 4, 12, 17, 21, 22, 27—Lines to my Grandfather—Wishes—I do set my Bow in the Cloud—Death is swallowed up in Victory—Two Pursuits—Afterward he repented, and went—Can I know it? Nay—Doeth well, . . . doeth better—Balm in Gilead—Thou knewest, thou oughtest therefore—Bury Hope out of sight—A Churchyard Song of Patient Hope—Old and New Year Ditties—A Better Resurrection—The Heart knoweth its own Bitterness (when all the over-work of life)—Our mothers, lovely women pitiful—For Henrietta Polydore—Ash-Wednesday (Jesus, do I love Thee?)—The offering of the New Law—For a Mercy received—Come unto Me—Who shall deliver me?—A Rose Plant in Jericho—Weigh all my Faults and Follies righteously—Lord, grant me grace to love Thee in my pain Lord, make me one with thine own faithful ones—Three Stages—Looking Forward—Shut out—Downcast—Introspective—Memory—L. E. L.—Twilight Night—What would I give—A Sketch—Shall I forget?—En Route—Italia io ti Saluto—An Immurata Sister—By Way of Remembrance—Cor Mio (Still sometimes in my secret heart of hearts)—Meeting (I said good-bye in hope)—They desire a Better Country (I would not if I could undo my past)—Confluents—Valentines to my Mother—Parted—The Key-note—Yet a Little While (I dreamed and did not seek : to-day I seek)—One Seaside Grave—My Mouse—Il Rosseggiar dell' Oriente.

2. *Death.*—Later Life, Nos. 26, 27—The Dead Bride—Night and Death—Song (The stream moaneth as it floweth)—Death is swallowed up in Victory—Sweet Death—Laughing Life cries at the Feast—Sooner or later, yet at last—God is our Hope and Strength—Song (When I am dead, my dearest)—Dream Land—After Death—Rest—Looking Forward—Life Hidden—Remember—Sound Sleep—Two Thoughts of Death—A Pause—Long looked for—The Last Look—A Peal of Bells—My Friend—At Home—Yet a Little While—Better so—Life and Death—Songs in a Cornfield (p. 370)—An Immurata Sister—Of my Life—Days of Vanity—Mirrors of Life and Death.

3. *The Aspiration for Rest.*—The Lotus-eaters—Sonnet from the Psalms—There remaineth therefore a Rest (In the grave will be no space)—There remaineth therefore a Rest for the People of God (Rest remains when all is done)—A Burden—In Patience—Weary in Well-doing—All Saints, Martyrs—Love loveth thee and Wisdom loveth thee—Three Stages, No. 3—Dream Land—Rest—Sound Sleep—From the Antique (The wind shall lull us yet)—Yet a Little While—To-day's Burden—Sleeping at Last—What will it be?

4. *Vanity of Vanities*.—The Lowest Room (p. 19)—One Certainty—A Testimony—Vanity of Vanities (Of all the downfalls in the world)—Sleep at Sea—Mother Country—Saints and Angels—If thou sayest, Behold we knew it not, No. 3—A Vain Shadow—Vanity of Vanities (Ah! woe is me for pleasure that is vain)—Maiden May—Sœur Louise de la Miséricorde—Il Rosseggiar dell' Oriente, No. 20.

5. *Love of Animals*.—Goblin Market (p. 2)—From House to Home (p. 21)—A Pageant (pp. 48 to 50)—An Old-World Thicket—All Thy Works praise Thee, O Lord (p. 71)—Later Life, No. 20—These all wait upon Thee—Twilight Calm—To what purpose is this Waste?—My Dream (Hear now a curious dream I dreamed last night)—The Lambs of Grasmere—A Chill—Summer (Winter is cold-hearted)—Bird or Beast—Eve—A Green Cornfield—Bird Raptures—Valentines to my Mother, 1885—Mirrors of Life and Death—Freaks of Fashion—A Frog's Fate—Brother Bruin—Child's Talk in April—Winter (Sweet blackbird is silenced with chaffinch and thrush)—Minnie and Mattie—Hopping Frog, hop here and be seen—When the Cows come home the milk is coming—Hurt no Living Thing—A poor old Dog—Mole and Earthworm.

6. *Winter*.—Later Life, No. 19—Bitter for Sweet—Seasons (In Springtime when the leaves are young)—Seasons (Crocuses and snowdrops wither)—Winter Rain—Seasons (Oh the cheerful budding-time)—A Year's Windfalls—What's in a name?—There is a budding morrow in Midnight—Winter (Sweet blackbird, etc.).

7. *The Loveliness of the Rose*.—Three Nuns (p. 15)—Gone for ever—The Solitary Rose—As the Apple-tree among the Trees of the Wood—A Rose Plant in Jericho—Have Patience—Queen Rose—Three Moments—A Year's Windfalls—Maiden May—Brandons both—An October Garden—Summer is Ended—To my Fior-di-Lisa—Hope is like a Harebell trembling from its Birth—The Lily has a smooth Stalk.

MEMOIR

GABRIELE ROSSETTI and his wife Frances Mary Lavinia (Polidori), marrying in April 1826, had four children. They were: Maria Francesca, born 17 February 1827; Gabriel Charles Dante (better known as Dante Gabriel), 12 May 1828; William Michael, 25 September 1829; and Christina Georgina, 5 December 1830. These were all born at No. 38 Charlotte Street, Portland Place, London. Christina, like the other children, was baptized in the Church of England. Her two godmothers were Lady Dudley Stuart, originally the Princess Christine Bonaparte, a daughter of Lucian, and of course niece of the great Napoleon—Rossetti being well known to several members of this world-famous family; and Miss Georgina Macgregor, a daughter of Sir Patrick Macgregor, and pupil of Mrs. Rossetti, who had before marriage been a governess in that house.

In my Memoir of Dante Gabriel Rossetti, published along with his *Family Letters* in 1895, I have given various particulars about our father Gabriele Rossetti, and a few about our mother. I shall not repeat them here, beyond what is necessary for my immediate purpose. Gabriele Rossetti was a native of Vasto in the Abruzzi, kingdom of Naples, born February 1783. His origin was quite undistinguished, his father being a blacksmith and locksmith, and his maternal grandfather a shoemaker; he had however, I believe, some hereditary connection with a family of more position, named Della Guardia, and either in the Rossetti or in the Della Guardia line of a previous period there had been some sort of local literary note. Gabriele Rossetti showed an early aptitude for drawing, and also for verse. He went towards 1803 to Naples, and held for a short time the official post of librettist to the Operatic Theatre of San Carlo, and for a much longer term that of custodian of Ancient Bronzes in the Naples Museum. He published in Naples some of his poetical compositions, but was more especially known and admired as an improvisatore. In 1820 he adhered to the movement, started by a military uprising, for obtaining a Constitution for the kingdom of Naples. The Bourbon king, Ferdinand I., granted and swore to the Constitution; and then rapidly revoked it, and treated its promoters as criminals. In the summer of 1821 Rossetti had

to escape from Naples in disguise ; sojourned for a while in Malta ; and early in 1824 came over to London. He married the second daughter of Gaetano Polidori ; he being at the time forty-three years of age, and she much younger, barely twenty-six. Polidori had, in his youth, been secretary to the celebrated dramatic poet Alfieri ; he was a teacher of Italian in London, and author of many books, and had been the father of Dr. John Polidori, who became Byron's travelling physician in 1816, made some name as author of *The Vampyre*, and committed suicide in 1821.

In London Gabriele Rossetti (having no private means of subsistence whatever, and his wife nothing in hand, and only a modest contingent expectation) followed the same career as his father-in-law—that of teaching Italian. He was appointed Professor of Italian in King's College, London, in 1831 ; but this added little to his occupations, and next to nothing to his income. He published several books, both verse and prose. The verse procured him very considerable celebrity in Italy as a patriotic poet ; the prose—largely concerned with the interpretation of Dante and other mediæval writers as being members of a secret school of daring speculators in politics and religion—was prohibited in Italy (and so indeed was the verse), but made a good deal of stir in England, earning some few partizans here and there, and a fair number of adversaries. Rossetti did not naturalize himself as an Englishman, but remained an Italian, and a highly patriotic Italian ; neither did he protestantize, though in open and frequently published opposition to the papal system and pretensions.

Such was the household into which Christina Rossetti was born ; a household of narrow means, according to the English standard of income and living (I suppose the years were very few in which Rossetti made, from all sources, more than an annual £300, and it must generally have been less) ; of no display and no inclination for display ; of careful but not stingy economy—the father being highly inexpensive in all personal habits, and the mother an assiduous housewife from day to day and from year to year ; of infallibly upright dealing and no indebtedness ; of substantial but not self-indulgent comfort ; of steady continuous occupation ; of a high standard of right ; of serious thinking and many intellectual interests—few of any other sort. These brief words of attestation are no more than my due to my parents ; to point out the defects of my father, or to discover some in my mother, is not incumbent upon me, nor indeed is there anything of this kind which needs to be stated as relevant to the home-life of Christina Rossetti. I should add that Mrs. Rossetti (who was of wholly English extraction on her mother's side, as of wholly Italian extraction on her father's) was born and bred in London, and was of a decidedly English rather than Italian type of person and character ; her education was good, her mind fully formed. The mutual affection and esteem of husband and wife were solid and unvarying ; there was little dissent between them—except indeed an abstract dissent on subjects of religion—and quarrelling

and nagging were unknown. Rossetti was mainly a free-thinker, although much in sympathy with the moral and spiritual teachings of the Gospel; his wife was a devout but not a sanctimonious member of the Church of England—the dominant tone of which was, towards the date of Christina's birth, the 'evangelical,' the 'high church' being as yet dormant.

Christina, as being the youngest of the four children, could not fail to be influenced to some extent, in her earliest years, by the qualities of her sister and brothers, as well as of her parents. Maria was mentally a precocious child, learning very early and easily all such matters as reading, writing, speaking two languages, etc.; indeed she was from first to last much the best of the four at all matters of acquired knowledge of that sort. She was of an upright and affectionate, but naturally a rather jealous, disposition, and of enthusiastic temperament; plunging with great ardour, before reaching the age of twelve or eleven, into such themes as the career of Napoleon, the Iliad, Grecian mythology, etc. From her earliest years she was devout; and, after being confirmed (towards 1840), she made religion her paramount concern, attending little in comparison to anything else. The character of Gabriel is perhaps pretty well understood by readers at the present day. In childhood as in manhood he was ardent, impulsive, dominant, generous, good-natured; not unfrequently passionate; determined to be a painter; eagerly susceptible to anything of a poetic, imaginative, or fanciful kind, but not to what partook of abstract or scientific knowledge. Of myself I will say nothing, except that I was a somewhat demure little boy, not quarrelsome and not teasing, and, as nearest to Christina in age, was regarded by her as a kind of ally against the thews, sinews, and dictation (such as they were), of our two very juvenile seniors.

The earliest years of a child's life are doubtless of great consequence in forming lines of character which afterwards deepen; but those very earliest years do not remain clear to the consciousness of the adult. Let us then, ignoring those first years, imagine Christina Rossetti at the age of five years completed, or about as far back as she would plainly remember in after life, and define a little of what she saw around her. It is the beginning of the year 1836, in which the family moved from No. 38 Charlotte Street to No. 50, a rather larger house, but still a small one. The father is now no less than fifty-three years old, the mother thirty-six.

The Rossetti household was thoroughly unconventional, living plainly and comfortably within their own walls, and being very little visible to outsiders. No Rossetti, and also no Polidori, had any idea of 'keeping in the fashion'; one or other of them (but this does not rightly apply to my mother) would have been found in 1860 dressing in very much the same mode as in 1835. Hence a kind of family tradition, which to some extent—though it was but a very minor extent in comparison—clung to Christina in her adult years. Our father was either occupied out-of-doors teaching, or was indoors writing about Dante, Freemasonry, and other light topics.

He was kind in his family, open-hearted, very animated in mind and manner, and on the whole cheerful, in spite of the bitterness of exile and the wrestle with fortune. The mother went out into society hardly at all, being wholly devoted to her domestic duties, with husband and four young children. The education of her two daughters was, from first to last, entirely her work—allowing for some trifles, such as singing and dancing lessons, and these had no appreciable sequel. There was nothing of the ascetic about her, nor yet any disregard for the social proprieties, as ordinarily accepted and applied: but an extreme indifference to ‘showing off,’ or putting herself forward in any way whatever, and a perfect willingness to forego all sorts of diversions and social distractions; her duties, her requisite occupations, and the cultivation of her mind by miscellaneous readings in three languages, sufficed her. The children were constantly with their parents; there was no separate nursery, and no rigid line drawn between the big ones and the little ones. Of English society there was extremely little—barely one or two families that we saw something of at moderate intervals; but of Italian society in the sense of Italians who hunted up and haunted our father as an old acquaintance or a celebrity—the stream was constant and copious. Singular personages these Italians (with occasionally some foreigner of a different nationality) were, in many instances; almost all of them eager after something—few or none eager after those things which occupy the thoughts of the average Englishman—to increase his income, to rise a grade higher in social position, to set his children going in one of the approved grooves, to relax over the sporting columns of a newspaper. There were exiles, patriots, politicians, literary men, musicians, and some of inferior standing; fleshy good-natured Neapolitans, keen Tuscans, emphatic Romans. As we children were habituated from our earliest years to speaking Italian with our father, we were able to follow all or most of the speech of these ‘natives’; and a conspirator or a semi-brigand might present himself, and open out on his topics of predilection, without our being told to leave the room. All this even apart from our chiefly Italian blood—made us, no doubt, not a little different from British children in habit of thought and standard of association; and, when Dante and Christina Rossetti proved, as poetic writers, somewhat devious from the British tradition and the insular mind, we may say, if not ‘so much the better,’ at any rate, ‘no wonder.’

Apart from her sister and brothers, Christina had no relatives of nearly her own age. She received plenty of affection from her maternal grandparents and maiden aunts. Most of this branch of the family lived in those years in the country—at Holmer Green, near Little Missenden, Buckinghamshire. Through staying there from time to time Christina came to know something, and to love much, of rural appearances—gardens, poultry, ponds, frogs, etc.; but this came to an end in 1839, when the Polidoris removed back into London, and from that time onward her experiences of

anything countrified were decidedly sparse and scanty. Our father never took his family out of town for annual jaunts, as for instance to the seaside; there was little money to spend on any such relaxations, and not much disposition to be on the move. Later on (as may readily be guessed) Christina visited several of the ordinary seaside or other resorts: Brighton, Hastings, Clifton, Cheltenham, Sevenoaks, Torquay, etc.; she was a little in Scotland, never in Ireland. In childhood she was of a lively, and a somewhat capricious or even fractious, temper; but she was warm-natured, engaging, and a general favourite, considerably prettier than her elder sister Maria. She was by far the least bookish of the family—liking a few things heartily, such as *The Arabian Nights* and the lyric dramas of Metastasio, but generally not applying herself with assiduity to either her books or her studies. She ‘picked up’ things rather than acquired them.

I will give here three small anecdotes of Christina’s childhood. They may be ‘puerile’ or ‘silly,’ yet are characteristic in their way, and have a kind of bearing upon her faculty as a writer. It appears to me that at the dates of the first two incidents my own age was still under seven, so Christina’s was under six: in the third instance she may have been between seven and eight.

1. One day Mrs. Cipriani Potter (the wife of the Principal of the Royal Academy of Music, who was my godfather) called upon my mother. Christina was in the room, and our household tabby cat, who, being of mature age, wore that aspect of self-collected gravity with which we are all familiar. Christina made the remark, ‘The cat looks very sedate,’ and I can still remember the glance of amused surprise with which Mrs. Potter greeted the use, by such infantine lips, of such a ‘dictionary-word,’ so appositely introduced. 2. It appears to me that the very first verses composed and spoken by Christina (she was too young to *write* them) were these—they do not profess to be rhyme, but are metre, and correct metre:—

Cecilia never went to school
Without her gladiator.

There was no reason for coupling ‘gladiator’ with ‘Cecilia.’ The Christian name had been found, I fancy, in a book which we then often skimmed, named *The Looking-Glass for the Mind*, and something or other about gladiators had recently been heard by Christina, and the word (if nothing else) had hit her fancy. She understood this much—that a ‘gladiator’ would be a man capable of showing some fight for ‘Cecilia’ upon an emergency. Unmeaning as the lines and the association are, they are not without hinting at a certain oddity or whimsicality of combination which (mingled indeed with qualities of a very different kind) can be not unfrequently traced in the verse of her mature years. 3. Possibly the earliest thing which Christina wrote (or rather, I think, got some one to write from

her dictation) was the beginning of a tale called perhaps *The Dervise*, on the model (more or less, *i.e.* very little) of *The Arabian Nights*. The dervise, I think, went down into a cavern, where he was to meet with some adventures not much less surprising than those of Aladdin. In the thick of the plot it occurred to Christina that she had not yet given her dervise a name, so she interjected a sentence, 'The Dervise's name was Hassan,' and continued his perilous performances. This outraged the literary sense of Gabriel and the rest of us. I doubt whether, after *The Dervise*, Christina wrote anything else prior to 1840, the date of *Retribution*, which I have briefly mentioned in my Memoir of Dante Rossetti. This also must have been an oriental—I suppose a crusading—prose tale, as one incident was 'Sir Guy finding the letter of Ali.'

I do not seem to know of any other writing by my sister until we come to the date, 27 April 1842, of her first written verses, 'To my Mother.' These were soon privately printed by our grandfather Polidori. They open—in the spirit of filial love which was hers through life—her career as a poetess. From that point onward the present volume furnishes ample material for judging what she was like in heart, mind, feeling, aspiration, faculty, and executive gift; and I may leave that matter to speak for itself.

Christina was, I think, a tolerably healthy girl in mere childhood; but this state of things soon came to an end. She was not fully fifteen when her constitution became obviously delicate. She always received excellent medical advice, and was treated at different times for a variety of maladies. There was angina pectoris (actual or supposed), of which, after some long while, she seemed cured; then cough, with symptoms which were accounted ominous of decline or consumption, lasting on towards 1867; then exophthalmic bronchocele (or Dr. Graves's disease), which began in 1871, and was truly most formidable and prostrating, and which, after destroying for a while all her good looks, left her with permanent cardiac troubles, and an aspect, not indeed anything like so bad as it had been in the thick of the disease, but still sensibly altered. And yet she survived every single member of the Rossetti and Polidori families, myself and my children alone excepted. All these maladies were apart from her last and mortal illness, of which I must say a few words in its place. I have naturally much more reluctance than inclination to dwell upon any of these physical ills; but any one who did not understand that Christina was an almost constant and often a sadly-smitten invalid, seeing at times the countenance of Death very close to her own, would form an extremely incorrect notion of her corporal, and thus in some sense of her spiritual, condition. She was compelled, even if not naturally disposed, to regard this world as a 'valley of the shadow of death,' and to make near acquaintance with promises, and also with threatenings, applicable to a different world. As an invalid she had courage, patience, and even cheerfulness. I have heard her dwell upon the satisfaction—such as it is—of being ill, and interdicted from active exertion and the following-out of

one's fancies. Perhaps the least unhealthy years of her womanhood were towards 1861, and again from 1867 to 1870—age thirty, going on to thirty-nine.

The fortunes of the Rossetti family, always mediocre enough, were at a low ebb from 1842 to 1854. Ill-health and partial blindness overtook our father, leading to the diminution, and ultimately the loss, of professional employment. The sustenance of the household devolved to some extent upon our mother, who went out teaching. Maria was a governess—at first a resident governess, but afterwards attending to pupils from her home. Dante Gabriel, until 1848, could earn nothing, and for some ensuing years very little, and the expenses of starting him in his pictorial vocation were not inconsiderable. For myself, I became an extra clerk in the Excise (or Inland Revenue) Office from 1845, earning a very moderate stipend, which gradually increased; and from 1850 I got some amount of paid literary employment as well. Christina, though she had no propensity to educational or other drudgery, was always most willing to do what might offer. In 1851-52 she assisted our mother in a small day-school at No. 38 Arlington Street, Mornington Crescent. This was far from prosperous, and in 1853 they two, along with our father, moved off to Frome-Selwood, Somerset, in hopes that another day-school might work better. This also proved a comparative failure; and early in 1854 I found myself sufficiently floated to allow of our all living again together in London—all, that is, except Dante Gabriel, who by this time had separate chambers of his own. We reunited in Upper Albany Street—the house now called No. 166 Albany Street; and from this time forward Christina simply lived at home—no longer under the necessity of teaching the small daughters of the neighbouring hairdresser or the neighbouring pork-butcher their p's and q's, but anxious to secure any literary pickings which might offer, and producing poems which the world has not as yet been willing to let die. Her earnings were decidedly meagre. I suppose that from 1854 to 1862 she seldom made £10 in a year; from 1862 to 1890 there might be (taking one year with another) an average of perhaps £40 per annum—less rather than more. By 1890 her poetic reputation was fully settled, and her profits were substantial, without being at all large. Of private income she had, so far as I remember, absolutely none up to 1867, and for many years after that a mere pittance. But, of course, she lived in comfort and security as a member of the family along with other members.

The family had scarcely got reunited in Albany Street when Gabriele Rossetti died, 26 April 1854.

I must now go back a little in date, and give some slight account of an 'affair of the heart' which brightened and darkened the life of Christina Rossetti.¹ There were two such incidents, at an interval of years. The

¹ Readers of her poems had not failed to see, and to say, that some such affair or affairs must have given rise to several of the compositions: but nothing distinct had been

first began in 1848, before she was aged eighteen, and ended in 1850, or possibly late in 1849. The second must have commenced¹ towards the close of 1862; except as a matter of feeling, it terminated towards the opening of 1867.

James Collinson was a painter, who fell in love with Christina soon after being introduced to her. He was chiefly a domestic painter, and had been enrolled in the 'Præraphaelite Brotherhood,' formed towards September 1848. He had originally been a member of the Church of England, and a devout one; but, before making acquaintance with Christina, he had been converted to Roman Catholicism. On explaining his feelings, he was informed that this difference in church-faith formed an obstacle not to be got over. From this fact it might appear that Christina—who already belonged to what was then called the Puseyite or Tractarian party in the English Church, or (as we should now say) the High Church party or Anglo-Catholics—was decidedly hostile to Roman Catholicism. I do not, however, think she was that. I consider that she held then as she certainly did in later years—that the Roman Catholics are authentic members of the one veritable Church of Christ, but in some matters erroneous; she was, for instance, firmly opposed to anything savouring of Mariolatry. I do not see that her religious tenets were such as to make marriage with a Roman Catholic, in itself, distasteful to her, or contrary to her sense of duty: she may rather perhaps have been influenced by the consideration that, in the event of giving birth to children, she would be at odds with her husband as to the faith in which these should be brought up, with consequences which might expose their souls to peril and scathe. Anyhow she declined Collinson's offer, although, on general grounds, very well disposed towards him. Collinson then seems to have supposed that, after all, his religious convictions were not incompatible with membership in the English Church: he reverted to it, proposed to Christina again, and was accepted. But after a moderate while he found once more that his conscience pricked him, and he must at all hazards be a Roman Catholic. Such he re-became, and Christina (whose force of will, especially where any point of duty seemed to be concerned, was in full proportion to the family motto, *Frangas non flectas*) cancelled the engagement. I will not harshly condemn James Collinson for these successive tergiversations: he was a right-meaning man, of timorous conscience. But he had none the less struck a staggering blow at Christina Rossetti's peace of mind on the very threshold of womanly life, and a blow from which she did not fully recover for years. He died in 1881.

printed on the subject, prior to a note which I inserted in the volume *New Poems*, 1896. In that note I indicated the main facts very briefly, not giving names. It appears to me that there is now no serious reason for withholding the names. I therefore state them, along with the other particulars.

¹ See the series of Italian compositions, *Il Rosseggiar dell' Oriente*.

I must next deal with a personage of higher type, Charles Bagot Cayley, a man of letters and an author, but less author than scholar. Christina may first have known him as far back as 1847 or so, and again in 1854: but the two did not meet much until some such date as 1860. Towards 1847 he had been a pupil of my father for Italian; and he became an excellent Italian scholar (indeed a remarkable linguist generally), and produced a most able translation of Dante's *Comedia* in the original metre. He was a singularly unworldly person, which was no doubt in my sister's eyes a merit, and not a blemish. His precise religious opinions are not clear to me: he had been brought up in the Church of England. I suppose that, like so many other men of inquiring mind, he regarded all religions as much the same thing—a mixture of feeling with thought, and also with assumption and legend, not with verification. He may have considered Christianity the best of all religions, but not as being on a different plane from others, absolute truth as contrasted with fallacy. In course of time he proposed to Christina. She loved him deeply and permanently, but, on his declaring himself, she must no doubt have probed his faith, and found it either strictly wrong or woefully defective. So she declined his suit, but without ceasing to see and to cherish him as a friend. Knowing the state of her heart when the proposal was made, I urged her to marry, and offered that they should both, if money difficulties stood in the way, share my home. But she had made up her mind on grounds which she recognized as higher than any considerations of either feeling or expediency, and she remained immovable. Years passed: she became an elderly and an old woman, and she loved the scholarly recluse to the last day of his life, 5 December 1883, and, to the last day of her own, his memory.

It may be added that Christina was extremely reticent in all matters in which her affections were deeply engaged. Of these two cases I knew a good deal directly, and could indirectly judge of much more; but it would have been both indelicate and futile to press her with inquiries, and of several details in the second case—though important to a close understanding of it—I never was cognizant.

As Mr. Cayley was so important a personage in the hushed life-drama of Christina Rossetti, I will here insert a portion of the obituary notice of him which I wrote, and which was printed in *The Athenæum*:—‘Mr. Charles Bagot Cayley, B.A., of Trinity College, Cambridge, died suddenly, and apparently without any serious forewarning, of heart disease, in the night of the 4th-5th December, in his lodging at South Crescent, Bedford Square: he was found dead in the morning, having expired, it would seem, in perfect calm during sleep. This gentleman was the son of a Russia merchant, and younger brother of the celebrated mathematician, the Sadlerian Professor at Cambridge. He was born on 9 July 1823, and had therefore completed his sixtieth year. Several of his early years were passed in

Russia. . . . He published, many years ago, a volume of original poems named *Psyche's Interludes*. Some of the same compositions, with others added, re-appeared lately in a privately printed volume. Mr. Cayley was for many years past an active and valued member of the Philological Society. . . . A more complete specimen than Mr. Charles Cayley of the abstracted scholar in appearance and manner—the scholar who constantly lives an inward and unmaterial life, faintly perceptive of external facts and appearances—could hardly be conceived. He united great sweetness to great simplicity of character, and was not less polite than unworldly. In a small circle of intimates his death leaves a mournful blank: they “will not look upon his like again.”

Apart from these two matters, the life of Christina Rossetti presents hardly any incident. Her life had two motive powers,—religion and affection: hardly a third. And even the religion was far more a thing of the heart than of the mind: she clung to and loved the Christian creed because she loved Jesus Christ. ‘Christ is God’ was her one dominant idea. Faith with her was faith pure and absolute: an entire acceptance of a thing revealed—not a quest for any confirmation or demonstrative proof. There were few things she more disliked than an ‘Evidences of Christianity’: I dare say she never read one, but she must have glanced at one or other sufficiently to know that she disliked it. To learn that something in the Christian faith was credible *because it was reasonable*, or because it rested upon some historic evidence of fact, went against her. Her attitude of mind was: ‘I believe because I am told to believe, and I know that the authority which tells me to believe is the only real authority extant, God.’ To press her—‘How do you know that it is God?’ would have been no use; the ultimate response could only have come to this—‘My faith is faith; it is not evolved out of argumentation, nor does it seek the aid of that.’ If she did not admit of discussion of her own belief, neither did she indulge in any discussion of the belief of others: no one knows this better than myself, with whom the field for debate, had she been minded to it, would have been a very large one. In fact, though enormously strict with herself in matters of religious faith and dogma, she was not intolerant of difference of opinion in others: she met on terms of close or amicable good-will many persons whom she knew to be decided disbelievers, not to speak of earnest and devout Dissenters. The Christian believer has before him two things: one, the promise of ecstatic bliss; the other, the decree of excessive misery. Some believers, perceiving themselves to be undoubted Christians in faith, become serenely or perhaps exuberantly happy in their inner selves: it may be said that Maria Rossetti was of these, for (at any rate in her later years) she felt the firmest confidence of salvation. Not so Christina, who always distrusted herself, and her relation to that standard of Christian duty which she constantly acknowledged and professed. In this regard her tone of mind was mainly

despondent: it was painfully despondent in the last few months of her life, but as to that the physical minor reasons may have been as truly operative as the spiritual major reason. All her life long she felt—or rather she exaggerated—her deficiencies or backslidings: she did not face religion with that courageous yet modest front with which a virtuous woman, who knows something of the world, faces life. Passages can no doubt be found in her writings in which she is more hopeful than abased; in which her ardent aspirations towards heaven so identify her with its bliss that she seems to be almost there, or on the very threshold. These passages are of course perfectly genuine; but they are coupled with an awful sense of unworthiness, shadowed by an awful uncertainty. I will not dwell upon slighter matters—those which constituted her a ‘devotee’ in the ordinary sense—her perpetual church-going and communions, her prayers and fasts, her submission to clerical direction, her oblations, her practice of confession. It should be said that, while she had an intense reverence for the priestly function, she cared next to nothing about hierarchical distinctions: anything which assimilated the clerical order to a ‘learned profession’ forming part of the British constitution left her indifferent, or rather inimical.

I have often thought that Christina’s proper place was in the Roman Catholic Church, yet I never traced any inclination in her to join it, nor did she ever manifest any wish to enter upon the conventual life—I think she held herself unworthy of attempting it. Her satisfaction in remaining a member of the English Church may have been due partly to her deep affection for her mother, who, though gradually conforming to the external practices of the High Church section, was far indeed from wishing to Romanize.

I have said that, along with religion, affection was the motive power of Christina’s life. For all her kith and kin, but for her mother far beyond all the rest, her love was as deep as it was often silent. She was not demonstrative, though of a fondling habit as regards her mother. To the latter it may truly be said that her whole life was devoted: they were seldom severed, even for a few days together. When at last, in 1886, death divided them, she tended her two aged aunts with like assiduity, although it was impossible that her outflow of love towards either of them should have had any similar force and glow. Maria she was truly fond of, and she regarded her latterly as almost a saint; of Dante Gabriel she was, so far as natural predilection goes, still fonder—and I might say the same of myself. It will easily be understood that, much as she saw of *him* after they were both grown up, she saw far more of me, for until 1876 (and allowing for the short interval in 1853-54) she and I were always residing together.

Like her mother, Christina went very little into society; none the less she knew and appreciated several leading personages, whom I will name in the order of date (approximately) when she made acquaintance with them: all the members of the Præraphaelite Brotherhood, Madox Brown

with his family,¹ Coventry Patmore, Professor Masson, Burne-Jones, William Morris, Ruskin (I question whether she saw him more than once), Dodgson, Dr. Garnett, Robert Browning (but, unfortunately, not Mrs. Browning), Swinburne, Jean Ingelow, Gosse, Watts-Dunton, Shields, Hall Caine. Many others could be named—Dr. Adolf Heimann, Canon Burrows, W. Bell Scott, James Hannay, J. R. Clayton, William Allingham, Dr. John Epps, Mrs. Bodichon, John L. Tupper, the Howitts, John Brett, Thomas and John Seddon, Henrietta Rintoul, Arthur Hughes, Adelaide Procter, Alexander Macmillan (her publisher, with whom she always had very amicable relations), William Ralston, Stillman, Anne Gilchrist, Dora Greenwell, Miss Alice Boyd, Mrs. Cameron, the Rev. Orby Shipley, Dr. Littledale, James Smetham, Hueffer, the Rev. Alfred Gurney, Dr. Hake, Prebendary Glendinning Nash (her clergyman in late years), Lady Mount-Temple, William Sharp, Professor Dunstan, Lisa Wilson, Miss Ellen Proctor, Mackenzie Bell. From a perusal of this list the reader will correctly infer that after the death of our father we saw little—next to nothing—of Italian society. There was, however, our cousin Teodorico Pietrocicola-Rossetti, a leader in an Italian Evangelical movement, for whom and his Scottish wife Christina felt a sincere attachment. The physician whom my sister consulted was for many years Sir William Jenner : there were also Dr. Hare, Dr. Crellin, Dr. Wilson Fox, Dr. Stewart, and others ; and at the very last Dr. Abbott Anderson.

In company she was quiet, and reserved rather than otherwise, but made every now and then some remark which arrested attention. She was as a fact extremely shy. Most people probably perceived as much ; but she preserved a calm and collected demeanour, which may perhaps have imposed upon some of the unwary, and induced them to fancy her distant rather than backward. Upon her reputation as a poetess she never presumed, nor did she ever volunteer an allusion to any of her performances : in a roomful of mediocrities she consented to seem the most mediocre as the most unobtrusive of all.

In a life marked by so few external incidents, such matters as the deaths of relatives and friends count for much : I will mention the leading occurrences of this kind, along with some changes of residence, and the like—all in a very summary form. 1853, death of the Polidoris, grandmother and grandfather. 1854 (as already specified), death of our father, Gabriele Rossetti. Later in the same year Christina wished to join her aunt Eliza Polidori in going out as a nurse to Scutari, in connection with the Crimean War, under the scheme planned out by Miss Nightingale ; but she was pronounced to be below the stipulated age, so this did not take effect. 1861, Christina's first foreign trip, with our mother and

¹ To avoid tediousness, I do not mention the family in the several instances ; but it may be taken that very generally, when a married person is mentioned, the family also was known to Christina.

myself, to Paris, Rouen, Normandy (especially Coutances), and Jersey. 1862, death of Lizzie Rossetti, the wife of Dante Gabriel. After this loss Dante proposed that the family, amalgamating with him, should seek a new residence. There would have been our mother, all her children, and our somewhat invalided eldest aunt, Margaret Polidori, who as yet occupied separate apartments in my house in Albany Street: she would have continued separate to a like degree. Dante wished also that Mr. Algernon Swinburne should be in the house—for, as he truly said, he himself required some amount of intellectual incitement and diversion beyond what the family could minister to him. To this proposal Christina, with the rest of us, assented; but it was soon set aside, as Dante came to prefer a different arrangement. 1865, Christina's second and last foreign trip, in the same company as before, to North Italy (Como, Pavia, Brescia, Verona, Milan, etc.), going out by the St. Gothard route (no tunnel was then in existence), and returning by the Splügen route, Schaffhausen, Strasbourg, etc. 1867, death of Margaret Polidori, a very diligent religionist and church-goer; and removal of Christina, with our mother, Maria, and myself, to No. 56 Euston Square (now called 5 Endsleigh Gardens), a much more commodious house than any we had previously occupied. 1873, in view of my impending marriage to Lucy, daughter of the painter Ford Madox Brown, Maria resolved to carry at once into execution a project she had long entertained, that of entering the Anglican Sisterhood of All Saints. 1874, my marriage: my mother and Christina continued to reside with us, but they not unfrequently spent a week or two with my mother's two sisters, Charlotte and Eliza Polidori, who (after my wedding and their consequent removal from 56 Euston Square) had taken a house, 12 Bloomsbury Square. Oliver Madox Brown, who was godson to Maria (only son of Ford Madox Brown), died in November; and in the same year Christina's cousin, still under thirty, Henrietta Polydore. 1876, family considerations led to the dividing of our household: my wife and daughter, with myself, remaining in Endsleigh Gardens, while my mother and Christina moved off at Michaelmas to No. 30 Torrington Square. Hardly were they settled there when the illness from which Maria had been suffering for many weeks took a fatal turn, and she died in November. 1882, death of Dante Gabriel at Birchington-on-Sea, 9 April, after several weeks' affectionate nursing by our mother and Christina. 1883, death of my infant son Michael. As his end approached, Christina implored me to allow her to baptize him; to this I raised no objection, and she performed the rite unwitnessed save by a nurse, and I doubt whether any act of her life yielded her more heartfelt satisfaction. 1885, death of our uncle, Henry Polydore, a Roman Catholic. 1886, 8 April, death of our mother, a loss to Christina which I forbear from dwelling upon. 1889, death of Franz Hueffer, the man of letters and musical expert and critic, husband of my wife's half-sister. 1890, death of Charlotte Polidori, aged eighty-seven,

after some years of confinement to her bed, a most amiable good woman, less out-of-the-world than other Polidoris, but not less religious; also death of our friend ever since 1847, William Bell Scott, a man whom Christina viewed with great predilection. When in 1892 his *Autobiographical Notes* were published, containing (as I informed her) several unkind and not too accurate passages about Dante Rossetti, she refused to look at the book, swayed, I think, as much by respect for Scott's memory as for her brother's. 1893, death of Eliza Polidori, aged eighty-three, after an illness still longer than Charlotte's, and more wearing to herself, and to Christina as her constant attendant; also death of Ford Madox Brown. With the decease of Eliza Polidori, her last relative of the elder generation, the income of Christina (which had been tolerable enough since 1886) increased, and henceforward she had more than what sufficed for her very moderate requirements. At all periods of her life she had been 'a cheerful giver,' as far as her means allowed. Until a late date these means allowed but little: when they allowed ten-fold, she gave (I dare say) twenty-fold. 1894, April, death of my beloved wife. This is a long mortuary catalogue; but many other deaths took place afflicting to Christina, few more so than those of her early and unfailing friends—Dr. Adolf Heimann, who had been Professor of German at University College, London; and Canon Burrows of Rochester, who had for many years been the Incumbent of the church—Christ Church, Albany Street—which she frequented from about 1843 to 1867 or later.

The Canon died at an advanced age in a year when Christina's own health and energies were little fitted to bear any strain. She was invited in 1892 to write a biography of him, and would have felt much pleasure in doing so, but she found it imperative to decline. Another project which miscarried, at nearly the same date, was the proposal made by our admirable painter, George F. Watts, the recorder of so many faces of pre-eminent men and women, that Christina should sit to him for her portrait. She was worthy to do so, and, spite of her life-long shrinking from any sort of notoriety, was anything but indifferent to the distinction thus offered her; but here again considerations of health and rapidly-ebbing life interposed an insuperable barrier. If any one thinks that Christina Rossetti was not the only loser by the failure of this project, I share his opinion.

It does not seem necessary, in this brief Memoir, to dwell upon any of the other incidents of her life—all in themselves insignificant. It was a life which did not consist of incidents: in few things, external; in all its deeper currents, internal.

I am now approaching the end. To a chronic affection of the heart, with a recurrent sense of suffocation (but this had not of late seemed so formidable as at some earlier periods), were added early in 1892 uneasy but not exactly painful sensations, which required to be explained. Medical

advice being taken, the explanation came : the case was one of cancer—a word which had always been pronounced in the family with a certain shrinking. Christina took the announcement most bravely. In May 1892 an operation of a very severe kind was performed by the distinguished surgeon Mr. Lawson—skilfully and successfully performed. After rallying from the shock to the system, Christina went on with an approach to comparative ease for some months, although it was too clearly foreseen that the malady would return. It did so towards the autumn of 1893 : no further operation was then practicable, and only palliatives could be applied. Dropsy of the left arm and hand complicated her other illness. In August 1894 she took finally to her bed, in a calm and resigned mood, but, as the time advanced, with troublous agitation, both of the spirit and of the bodily frame. Not that she was ever abashed by pain, or craven-hearted—far indeed from that ; but the terrors of her religion compassed her about, to the overclouding of its radiances. At the close of a week of collapse and semi-consciousness, she died without a struggle, in the act of inarticulate prayer, on the early morning of 29 December 1894—her attached nurse alone being present at the moment.

She was buried in Highgate Cemetery, in the same grave to which had been successively consigned her father, her sister-in-law Lizzie, and her mother. A reredos-painting, as a memorial of her, has been set up by subscription in Christ Church, Woburn Square. The design of it was supplied by an old acquaintance of hers, Sir Edward Burne-Jones ; the actual painting is by Mr. T. M. Rooke. It is a very appropriate and fine design,—Christ uttering the words of consecration of the eucharistic elements, and the four Evangelists as recorders of the event.

Christina Rossetti was of an ordinary female middle height—slim in youth, but, in middle and advanced age, often rather over-plump ; this had been the tendency of both her parents. Some people thought her extremely like her mother ; I myself never saw this strongly—the mother's features were the more regular of the two, but not perhaps the more agreeable in combination. My sister's complexion was dark and uniform—yet much less dark than Maria's—and after early youth her cheeks were colourless. Her hair was a dark brown, with a good deal of gloss ; not remarkably plenteous in youth, and only a little altered by age—to the last it was essentially brown, not grey. The same had been the case with her mother. Her eyes were originally a bluish grey (portraits show this) ; but in adult years they might rather be called a greyish hazel, or a richly hazelled grey, and towards the close they may have told out to most persons as being a warm brown, of dark tint. They were always of full size ; and, after the attack of exophthalmic bronchocele which began in 1871, they were over-prominent—even somewhat distressingly so at times, but by no means always. The forehead was ample, the lips not noticeably full, with a firm and also a sensitive expression, the chin rather prolonged and pointed in

girlhood, but this was little or not at all observable later on; the facial contour shapely. Her nose was not far from being straight, but taking a slight outward curve towards the tip. Her hands were delicate; and her figure might be called good, without being remarkably fine. She had a good speaking and reading voice—singing she never attempted, apart from the ordinary congregational singing in church. Indeed, I believe that her speaking voice, though not nearly so rich and impressive as Maria's, was considered in youth uncommonly fine in tone and modulation; in her later years there was a certain degree of strain and fatigue in it, but, to many persons who only knew her in those years, this may hardly have been apparent. Her utterance was clear; her delivery—as indeed her whole aspect and demeanour—marked unmistakably by sincerity, consideration for others, and a modest but not the less definite self-regard. I recollect having once told her jocularly (she was perhaps barely seventeen at the time) that ‘she would soon become so polite it would be impossible to live with her.’ She was one of the last persons with whom any one would feel inspired to take a liberty, though one might, without any sort of remonstrance, treat her as the least important of womankind.

A question has sometimes been raised as to the amount of good looks with which Christina Rossetti should be credited. She was certainly not what one understands by ‘a beauty’; the term handsome did not apply to her, nor yet the term pretty. Neither was she ‘a fine woman.’ She has sometimes been called ‘lovely’ in youth; and this is true, if a refined and correct mould of face, along with elevated and deep expression, is loveliness. She was assuredly much nearer to being beautiful than ugly; and this, in my opinion, remained true of her throughout her life, for in advanced years her expression naturally deepened, although the traces left upon her by disease, as well as by time, marred her comeliness. However, there are several portraits of her which can be appealed to to settle the question of her good looks; and, as I can speak of the matter with knowledge, I will give a list of them—they are in my own possession, unless otherwise notified.

1. The earliest portrait is a full-face taken by Filippo Pistrucci (the brother of the celebrated medallist), towards 1837. The best version of this water-colour, which has an agreeable childish look, belongs to my daughter, Signora Agresti, of Rome. It was reproduced in Mr. Mackenzie Bell's book; the colour has now faded considerably. W. Bell Scott made an etching of it, and I possess another water-colour nearly similar—perhaps a preliminary study for the head. The hair is of a rather bright warm tint.

2. Pistrucci again tried his hand at Christina's face, towards 1843, water-colour, but made a woful failure; the mouth especially being misdrawn, with a conceited smirking expression. This head is so bad that, but for its being mounted from of old in the same frame with the heads of

the other three children, I should prefer to destroy it, or at any rate hide it away. It shows that by this date Christina's hair was no longer bright, but decidedly brown.

3. Towards 1846, or possibly 1845, Dante Gabriel made a careful pencil-drawing of the head, profile. It is a good likeness, rather (I think) below the level of Christina's attractiveness at that time. It is also a good drawing, but of course does not display the finer qualities of Dante's art, which developed at a later date. This drawing is reproduced in the volume named *Gabriele Rossetti*, brought out by me in 1901.

4. There is a pretty little pencil-drawing by him, of Christina seated in an easy-chair, in a semi-dozing pose. Her general air is well realized, without any great definition of the face. This I take to be as late as 1847.

5. As a frontispiece to her privately printed volume, *Verses*, of 1847, Dante drew, probably in the same year, a careful profile in pencil. It shows Christina with curls (so does No. 2) and with some thinness of contour. It is certainly like her, but not in the most attractive way.

6. In 1848 Dante painted an oil-head of Christina: it appears to be the first coloured work that he completed. It is a true likeness, and shows a face so well-moulded and agreeable as to be, in a fair sense, beautiful. This head is reproduced in the *Family Letters and Memoir* of my brother which I published in 1895; some defect in the surface of the pigment or the canvas interferes with the success of the reproduction.

7. About contemporary with this—for I know not which was the earlier—comes the pencil-head by Dante Gabriel, purchased by Mr. Sydney Morse soon after Christina's death. This also is a most truthful likeness, and a highly pleasing one—rather more matter-of-fact in expression than the preceding. It appears in Mr. Bell's book and elsewhere.

8. The little pencil-head by Dante Gabriel, published with Christina's tale *Maude* in 1897, seems also to appertain to 1848. It is a nice but slight sketch, with some archness of expression—a quality in which the poetess was by no means deficient. The original now belongs to Mr. Coulson Kernahan.

9. The head of Mary, in the oil-picture of *The Girlhood of Mary Virgin* painted by my brother in 1848-49, was studied from Christina, and is a real if not a literal portrait of her, allowing for changed colour in the hair. The picture (now belonging to Lady Jekyll) has been reproduced in various forms.

10. The profile in pencil, by my brother, which appears in the *New Poems*, 1896, and in the present volume, exquisitely sweet in contour and expression, may have been done in 1849; as I have said elsewhere, it has something of the air of a study preliminary to No. 13, but not in the same pose.

11. The small oil-portrait by James Collinson, given in Mr. Bell's book. This is a true likeness of Christina: a true but also an ordinary one, done

by an artist whose eye for beauty was not keen, and whose style was stunted. Its date is 1849. In 1901 it figured in the Great Exhibition in Glasgow.

12. Towards the same time my brother did a small pencil half-figure of Christina, in profile. It is not important, but defines her general look well enough.

13. The picture by Dante Rossetti, *Ecce Ancilla Domini* (or *The Annunciation*), in the National British Gallery, 1849-50. The head of the Virgin was studied from Christina; it was however altered from time to time, and more than one person sat for it. I consider that it presents some substantial resemblance to Christina, and that the expression of *her* face more than any other is realized in it; a portrait it is not, and does not affect to be. When first exhibited, 1850, the likeness was more decided than it is now.

14. As shown in the book of Dante Rossetti's *Family Letters*, he drew a reminiscent caricature of Christina in August 1852; she is presented as listening in rapt attention to some verses improvised by a friend. The chief point observable in this caricature is that it gives the 'chin rather [or a good deal] prolonged and pointed,' on which I have before remarked.

15. The engaging pencil-drawing by Dante Rossetti reproduced in Mr. Bell's book—Christina seated and reading—October 1852; this affords an extremely good idea of the composed, orderly look of Christina in day-by-day life; placidly self-withdrawn, as incapable of parade in mental gifts as in toilet—but not incapable of making those gifts apparent when the occasion arose.

16. My brother's pen-and-ink design *Hesterna Rosa* (the property of Mr. F. G. Stephens), represents, with a motto from Sir Henry Taylor's *Philip van Artevelde*, two women in a tent with their paramours, who are playing at dice. One of the women, struck with a pang of remorse at the thought of her lapse from virtue, shades her face with her hand. I think it clear that this face is drawn from Christina, whom it resembles well; it is not from Miss Siddal, and at that date there was no other female head that he habitually drew.

17. In June 1853, when my sister was settled in Frome with our parents, I did a pencil sketch of her, the face being in rather full shadow. It has no pretensions as a work of art, but is not deficient in resemblance. There is also, from my hand, a profile outline, which may be of about the same date, but I think rather later; it preserves something, not only of her features, but of the serene, yet by no means unemotional, sweetness of her look.

18. In and about 1855 a friend, Miss (Henrietta) Rintoul, daughter of the then editor of *The Spectator*, took up photography as a diversion, and she made some photographs of Christina, which seem to be the earliest sun-pictures ever taken of her. Two of these photographs remain. In

both Christina is seated in a little balcony abutting on the leads of the house; alone in one instance—in the other along with myself. Both of these are very good likenesses of my sister; unfortunately, they have faded to a great extent.

19. Two photographs on glass were taken of Christina, along with Maria, in April 1855—three-quarter lengths. They are nearly, but not quite, identical, and both give her face with an air of brightness and animation, and of earnestness as well.

20. A photograph on glass, showing Christina along with our mother and Maria. I think the date may be 1856. This is the only portrait of Christina in which the hair is arranged (as customary in those years) over the ears, and with a plait coming circlet-wise across the head. It is an excellent likeness, attesting, by the irrefutable evidence of the sun, that she was not very far from being beautiful. This photograph is reproduced in the volume *Gabriele Rossetti*.

21. 1857 was the date of the publication of Tennyson's *Poems*, illustrated by Millais, Dante Rossetti, and others. On p. 119 is Rossetti's design of King Arthur in Avalon, 'watched by weeping queens.' The first face here (from the spectator's left) is taken from Christina, but is less like her on the engraved page than in the original drawing; she must also have sat for the profile to the extreme right, which is a very faithful likeness. Millais's design (p. 274) of the young lady (*Locksley Hall*) caught in possession of a love-letter is also not unlike Christina; I will not say, however, that it was done from her, for I cannot remember that, nor do I think it quite probable.

22. Towards 1862, soon after the publication of *Goblin Market*, and some laudatory critiques consequent thereon, Dante Gabriel noticed in *The Times* the critical phrase, 'Miss Rossetti can point to work which could not easily be mended.' By a wilful perversion of its obvious meaning, he knocked off a caricature (pen-and-ink) in which Christina, in a highly 'rampageous' mood, was kicking and pounding away with a hammer at the household clock, glass, and crockery; some bank-notes are in the fire. The caricature amused Christina, who preserved it; since it came into my possession I gave it to Signora Agresti. This is not much more like the poetess in visage than in action, but one can see whom it is meant for.

23. Three carte-de-visite photographs, taken in 1863. These, again, are extremely good, rendering very well the subdued dignity and elegant (though not fashionable) quietude of her aspect. Two of the figures are standing—the third is seated, bonneted.

24. In the autumn of 1863 the Rev. Mr. Dodgson (of *Alice in Wonderland*) attended more than once in my brother's house, 16 Cheyne Walk, and took in the garden photographs of the members of the family

whom he found at hand. One (reproduced in Mr. Bell's book) represents my mother and Christina, half-figures; highly successful, and showing the contour of my sister's face to great advantage. There are also three family-groups, two of them comprising four figures, and the other five. The last is spoiled by splashes. In each of these Christina is capitably characterized; one is a standing figure, giving an intellectual profile, and one a seated figure, with a cheerful and somewhat bantering air.

25. In May 1865 my brother made a very careful pencil-profile of Christina, on a fairly large (not life-size) scale. It is in every respect a highly impressive drawing. It suffers from having been begun at first on too small a piece of paper; the penciling has got rubbed, more especially on the hair, and the joining of the added paper is disagreeably apparent. This formed a frontispiece for the volume compiled by me, *Præraphælite Diaries and Letters*.

26. The best known of all the portraits of Christina is the drawing in coloured chalks, life-size, which Dante Rossetti executed in September 1866; it forms the frontispiece to Mr. Bell's book. This is a beautiful drawing, showing a face very chaste in outline, and distinguished in expression; it would be hard for any likeness to be more exact. I have seen it stated somewhere (and I believe *à propos* of this very drawing) that one cannot trust Rossetti's likenesses, as he always idealized. Few statements could be more untruthful. Certainly he aimed—and he succeeded—at bringing out the beauty and the fine expression of a face, rather than its more commonplace and superficial aspect; but his likenesses are, with casual exceptions, very strict transcripts of the fact. Any one who supposes, for instance, that Mrs. William Morris (whom my brother so constantly drew and painted from 1857 onwards) was not precisely like what he represented her, makes a very great mistake.

27. In the same year, 1866, Christina was a visitor at Penkill Castle, Ayrshire, the seat of Miss (Alice) Boyd. Mr. W. Bell Scott was there at the same time; and, in one of his mural paintings in the Castle, he represented her as a personage (? Minerva) in the Court of Venus, from the poem by James I. of Scotland, *The King's Quair*. I saw this painting many years ago, and I believe that the likeness of Christina is fairly characteristic. It has been reproduced by Scott in an etching and otherwise, but not so as to be recognizable.

28. At some date, which I suppose to be towards 1868, she sat for three photographs, all produced perhaps at one sitting. The best is a carte-de-visite, seated full-length, a profile, in which the face has a very thoughtful and expressive look. It is not a flattering likeness, but truly a valuable one. Another seated half-figure, much larger, has that rather set and blank air which comes over the face of a person expecting to be photographed. The third, only head and shoulders, is the reverse of attractive, but the resemblance is there.

29. It was in May 1877 that two photographs of Christina were taken by the skilled hands of Messrs. Elliott and Fry; these are the only photographs of her which seem to retain currency at the present day. It was no fault of Messrs. Elliott and Fry that neither portrait does her justice. They are both seated three-quarter figures, one of them in full face; this the sitter was accustomed to call 'the idiot,' and indeed it is sufficiently vacant-looking. The other is in profile, reading with lowered eyelids; it counts as the less unsatisfactory of the two. In both instances the eyeballs (from the cause to which I have already referred) are rather unpleasantly prominent.

30. The tinted-chalk head of Christina, along with our mother, now in the National Portrait Gallery, was drawn by Dante Rossetti at Hunter's Forestal, Herne Bay, as he was recovering from an illness in the autumn of 1877. This profile is markedly like a certain aspect of Christina's face which was not exactly unwonted, but still was exceptional; there is a rather inscrutable sphinx-like look about it. Whenever I set eyes upon it, the lines from her poem, *From House to Home*, come into my mind—

Therefore in patience I possess my soul;
Yea therefore as a flint I set my face.

31. Just about the same date my brother did two other tinted-chalk heads of Christina. In one the head is erect, full-face; in the other, three-quarters view, it is slightly drooped; in each of them she wears the cap which she had assumed before 1877, and which continued to the last to be her habitual wear. The latter drawing has been reproduced ere now; not, I think, the former, but it was shown in the Wolverhampton Art Exhibition of 1902. Both these are fine works of art, and speaking likenesses; the erect head partakes, in a minor degree, of the expression which I have noted under No. 30. Anything more close than the drooped head to the features and the sentiment of my sister's face in her advanced years (she was aged forty-six at the time) cannot well be imagined.

I fully think that after this date Christina never sat for her likeness, whether to the sun or to an artist. It is a pity, for seventeen further years elapsed before her death; and there were periods when her face certainly told to better advantage than in the photographs No. 29. I have had in my hands three or four other slight sketches of her by my brother, which I have given away here and there—all of them belonging to the days of her youth or early maturity. Two of them are in the Public Library of Des Moines, in the State of Iowa (United States).

I have thus specified, under 31 numbers, 45 portraits of Christina Rossetti, from the age of six years to that of forty-six. Those which I have numbered 6, 7, 10, 20, 23, 24, 25, 26, and 31, would afford to any one who sees them a very exact knowledge of what she was like from the age of

seventeen onwards ; and most of the others supplement them to some good purpose.

As yet I have said very little as to my sister's character, except that she was religious and affectionate in an eminent degree. It is time to proceed to some further detail.

In innate character she was vivacious, and open to pleasurable impressions ; and, during her girlhood, one might readily have supposed that she would develop into a woman of expansive heart, fond of society and diversions, and taking a part in them of more than average brilliancy. What came to pass was of course quite the contrary. In this result ill-health and an early blight to the affections told for much ; for much also an exceeding sensitiveness of conscience, acted upon by the strictest conceptions in religion. Of society (as one uses that term to mean fashionable or quasi-fashionable society) she saw nothing ; of amusements practically nothing. She was, I suppose, barely eighteen when she determined never again to enter a theatre, dramatic or operatic ; not perhaps that she considered plays and operas to be in themselves iniquitous, but rather that the moral tone of vocalists, actors, and actresses, is understood to be lax, and it behoves a Christian not to contribute to the encouragement of lax moralists. In all such matters Christina was an Anglo-Catholic, and, among Anglo-Catholics, a Puritan ; and yet she looked without hardness of heart upon any individual who might have lapsed from virtue. As well as theatres, she gave up at an early age the game of chess, of which she was rather fond, and this simply because she thought it made her too eager for a win. Cards however she never relinquished, finding no sort of harm in them ; and, up to the death of our mother, or probably even later, she would take a hand at whist, cribbage, or *bézique*, playing for no stakes whatever.

She had a very strong sense of duty and the most rigid regard for truth, in which indeed she resembled all the members of her maternal stock. That she was affectionate in her family I have already said, and she had, besides, a rather unusual feeling of deference for 'the head of the family,' whoever he might be—my father, Dante Gabriel, and finally myself. This might be accounted rather Italian than English. With several people she was extremely friendly, and no one felt more strongly than she the Christian obligation of being at charity with all men. This she found in the long-run a pleasant duty ; but it had not been exactly in her nature from the first, as she was certainly born with a marked antipathy to anything which savoured of vulgarity or 'bumptiousness,' and with an instinctive disposition to 'hold her head high,' though not to assert herself in express terms. In Christina's character there was great dignity tempered—or rather indeed reinforced—by modesty ; and to this her bearing corresponded faithfully. I have already referred to her having been, and this from an early age, rather punctiliously polite ; and it may be that some persons who knew her

intellectual and literary standing in the eye of the world fancied that there was something of affectation or even of sarcasm in this, which, however, was not so. Her speech was often sprightly, or to some extent witty, as well as still oftener simple, earnest, and grave—never abstract or argumentative. She was replete with the spirit of self-postponement, which passed into self-sacrifice whenever that quality was in demand. Such a spirit is, in fact, the spirit of chivalry, and *noblesse oblige* might have been her motto. Though shy, and even somewhat nervous, she was of unshaken firmness, making up her mind pretty easily in any crisis of her life, and abiding immovable. The narrow path was the only one for her, and a lion in the same path made no difference. With firmness, she knew fortitude also. A small point she was the first to concede; but, as soon as a jot of duty seemed involved in it, tenacity was in the very essence of her being. A marked trait in her character was gratitude, a quality which she inherited from both her parents. For the slightest attention or service she felt obliged; and for anything of a serious kind, deeply and permanently indebted. Although naturally of a rather indolent turn, disinclined to stick to an occupation, and often better pleased to be doing nothing than anything, she acquired habits of much assiduity, and neglected no household or other requirement which she perceived to have a claim upon her; and she was at once frugal and liberal. On self-indulgent luxuries, whether of the table or the toilet or aught else, she spent practically nothing at any period of life.

No precept of the Christian religion was more indelibly impressed upon her mind and her sympathies than ‘Judge not, that ye be not judged.’ She never—not even in thought, so far as thought was under her control—imputed a bad motive to any one; and to hear her talking scandal, or indulging in ill-natured gossip, would have been equally impossible as to see her putting on a pair of knickerbockers, or (as in Dante Gabriel’s caricature afore-mentioned) smashing the furniture. None the less she had a large fund of discernment, and speedily fathomed defects in her acquaintances which she never announced. Another text which she constantly bore in mind is that one is not to do ‘anything whereby thy brother stumbleth or is offended or is made weak.’ I have often thought that this trammelled her to some extent in writing, for she was wont to construe the biblical precepts in a very literal manner; and that she would in some instances have expressed herself with more latitude of thought and word, and to a more valuable effect, but for the fear of saying something which would somehow turn to the detriment of some timorous or dim-minded reader. She certainly felt that to write anything for publication is to incur a great spiritual responsibility.

This introduces us to what I regard as the one serious flaw in a beautiful and admirable character—she was by far over-scrupulous. Scrupulosity may be a virtue: over-scrupulosity is at any rate a semi-virtue, but

it has, to my thinking, the full practical bearings of a defect. It is more befitting for a nunnery than for London streets. It weakens the mind, straitens the temperament and character, chills the impulse and the influence. Over-scrupulosity made Christina Rossetti shut up her mind to almost all things save the Bible, and the admonitions and ministrations of priests. To ponder for herself whether a thing was true or not ceased to be a part of her intellect. The only question was whether or not it conformed to the Bible, as viewed by Anglo-Catholicism. Her temperament and character, naturally warm and free, became 'a fountain sealed.' Not but that affection continued to flow in abundant measure, and the clear line of duty told out all the more apparent from receiving no side-lights. Impulse and *élan* were checked, both in act and in writing, but the most extreme spontaneity in poetic performance always remained. The influence of her work became intense for devout minds of a certain type, and for lovers of poetry in its pure essence; but for a great mass of readers, who might otherwise have been attracted and secured, the material proffered was too uniform and too restricted, and was too seldom concerned with breathing and diurnal actualities—never with rising currents of thought.

I must however guard myself here against being supposed to say, what a great number of critics and readers or half-readers have said before me, that Christina's poetry is 'morbid.' Morbid things are to be found in it—where are they not to be found? and the fact that her feelings and perceptions were coloured by an infirm physical condition has been already stated, and was inevitable. But I cannot acknowledge that, for a person who entertained the belief which Christina really and deeply did entertain—the professed belief of all Christians—there is anything morbid in saying that this present life is far from satisfactory, that death is the avenue to a different life, which will be of eternal duration and may be made of ineffable bliss, and that therefore death is a transition to be rather wished for than shunned. No one would regard as morbid a person who, during this mundane life, should elect to pass from a condition of serious distress into one of extreme and lasting happiness, at the cost of a few minutes of physical pain; and this is a contrast infinitely smaller than that between life on earth and the promised life in heaven. As Christina's faith in these things was of iron solidity, so was her attitude of mind, consequent upon her faith, logical and sound; and to speak of morbidity in relation to it seems a decided misapplication of the term. It is open to any of us not to believe in her premisses, and thus to dissent from her conclusion, but the real morbidity would be to reject her conclusion while we admit her premisses.

I have said elsewhere, but may as well repeat it here, that her habits of composition were entirely of the casual and spontaneous kind, from her earliest to her latest years. If something came into her head which she found suggestive of verse, she put it into verse. It came to her (I take it,

very easily, without her meditating a possible subject, and without her making any great difference in the first from the latest form of the verses which embodied it; but *some* difference, with a view to right and fine detail of execution, she did of course make when needful. If the thing did not present itself before her, as something craving a vesture of verse at her hands, she did not write at all. What she wrote was pretty well known in the family as soon as her impeccably neat manuscript of it appeared in one of her little notebooks; but she did not show it about as an achievement, and still less had she, in the course of her work, invited any hint, counsel, or co-operation.

It may be asked—Did Christina Rossetti consider herself truly a poetess, and a good one? Truly a poetess, most decidedly yes; and, within the range of her subject and thought, and the limits of her executive endeavour, a good one. This did not make her in the least conceited or arrogant as regards herself, nor captious as to the work of others; but it did render her very resolute in setting a line of demarcation between a person who is a poet and another person who is a versifier. Pleadings *in misericordiam* were of no use with her, and she never could see any good reason why one who is not a poet should write in metre.

Christina was well versed in Italian and French; of German she knew some moderate amount; of Latin a mere smattering; Greek not at all. At no period of her life was she a great devourer of books, but the number of them which she had read in the course of her sixty-four years was necessarily considerable. Of science and philosophy she knew nothing, and to history she had no marked inclination; much more bias towards biography. Theology she studied, I think, very little indeed: there was the Bible, of which her knowledge was truly minute and ready, supplemented by the *Confessions* of Augustine and the *Imitation of Christ*. She also knew and liked *Pilgrim's Progress*. I question whether, apart from this one book of Augustine, she ever read any 'Father,' Latin or Greek, or desired to read him. To novel-reading she had no narrow-minded objection. Scott she certainly liked, and in early youth Dickens and Bulwer: Thackeray may have appeared to her too worldly and 'knowing,' but she understood his merits. She never, I think, looked into a book which was known or reputed to be 'improper,' and her acquaintance with French novels must have been extremely limited. Any such author as Rabelais would have been beyond measure repulsive to her—indeed, heartily despised as well as loathed; and Boccaccio, wherever he assimilates to a Rabelaisian side of things, would have shared the same fate. But it is certain to me that she never opened the pages of either. In poetry she was (need I say it?) capable of appreciating whatever is really good; and yet her affections, if not her perceptions, in poetry, were severely restricted. The one poet whom she really gloried in was Dante: next to him perhaps Homer, so far as she could estimate him in one or two English translations.

Tasso entranced her in girlhood, and perhaps retained a firm hold on her afterwards. Among very great authors, none (making allowance for Dante) seemed to appeal to her more than Plato: she read his *Dialogues* over and over again, with ever renewed or augmented zest. For Shakespear her intellectual reverence was of course very deep, but how far she delighted in him may be a different question. In tragedy, in feeling, in insight, in splendour of poetic expression, she must have known him supreme; but all the comic or 'Worldly Wiseman' side of Shakespear—except some bits of simple 'fun,' such as Dogberry and Verges—was certain to be distasteful to her. Humour, in its inner essence, she could enter into; but for any rollicking or cynical or unctuous aspect of humour she had no sort of relish. Sir Toby Belch and Falconbridge would simply repel her, and even Falstaff would find little indulgence and elicit only watery smiles. I say all this not as embodying any express remarks of hers, but because I understand her general habit of mind. Another great thing which she disliked was Milton's *Paradise Lost*: the only poems of his which she seems to me to have seriously loved were the sonnets. Among modern English poets, I should say that Shelley, or perhaps Coleridge, stood highest in her esteem; certainly not Wordsworth, whom she read scantily. As to Shelley, she can have known little beyond his lyrics; most of the long poems, as being 'impious,' remained unscanned. Tennyson she heartily enjoyed and admired, and Mrs. Browning; and Browning she honoured, without eager sympathy. The poems of William Morris were mostly unread by her—not unvalued. Of Swinburne she knew *Atalanta in Calydon*, and some few other things, including (I suppose) *Erechtheus*; and she regarded *Atalanta* as—what it is—a stupendous masterpiece. For one work by a poetess junior to herself she entertained an exceptional admiration—the tragic drama, *The Sentence* (relating to Caligula), by Augusta Webster. It would be possible to extend these remarks much, but here I may pause.

Christina had no politics; unless it be the rule 'Honesty is the best policy,' acting upon a constitution of mind much more conservative than inclined to change. In childhood she had, of course, through the influence and associations of her father, been nurtured in an atmosphere of bold political advance, tending to the revolutionary: this may have lingered with her as a kind of antidotal savour against conservatism, but hardly as a practical counterbalance. I do not think, however, that she ever viewed an Austrian—the bugbear of our early Italian environments—as quite on the same footing as men of other races. The two nations that she really liked, apart from those of the United Kingdom, were the Italians and the French. At the time of the great American war of secession, she was (like myself) a steady adversary of the slave-holders. As in politics, so in the fine arts of form—painting and sculpture—she had little fundamental opinion of her own, and no connoisseurship. She naturally adhered to what was high and noble in the arts, and would not have supposed that

something inane and bad was good ; but she neither possessed nor affected anything approaching to critical judgment in these matters. To music she was not insensitive ; but she was ignorant, and it formed no part of her concern.

As to Christina Rossetti's poetry, I feel that it is my part rather to keep silence than to speak, especially when, as in the present instance, her poems are presented to the public, to be judged of as the public wills. I will however say thus much—that, fully conscious as I am of their limitations, I consider that on some grounds it is hardly possible to over-praise them. Her prose writings partake of the same qualities to a certain extent—of course a minor extent.

As I have given in my Preface a list of the volumes which have hitherto constituted her poems, I think it as well to add here a list of the prose volumes ; and with that I terminate my summary account of a soul as pure, duteous, concentrated, loving, and devoted, as ever uttered itself in either prose or verse.

WILLIAM M. ROSSETTI.

LIST OF PROSE WORKS

1. *Commonplace, and other Short Stories*, 1870.
2. *Annus Domini, a Prayer for each Day of the Year*, 1874.
3. *Speaking Likenesses*, 1874.
4. *Seek and Find*, 1879.
5. *Called to be Saints*, 1881.
6. *Letter and Spirit*, 1883.
7. *Time Flies*, 1885.
8. *The Face of the Deep, a Devotional Commentary on the Apocalypse*, 1892.
9. *Maude*, 1897.

DEDICATORY SONNET

*SONNETS are full of love, and this my tome
Has many sonnets: so here now shall be
One sonnet more, a love sonnet, from me
To her whose heart is my heart's quiet home,
To my first Love, my Mother, on whose knee
I learnt love-lore that is not troublesome;
Whose service is my special dignity,
And she my lodestar while I go and come.
And so because you love me, and because
I love you, Mother, I have woven a wreath
Of rhymes wherewith to crown your honoured name:
In you not fourscore years can dim the flame
Of love, whose blessed glow transcends the laws
Of time and change and mortal life and death.*

April 1880.

THE LONGER POEMS

GOBLIN MARKET

MORNING and evening
Maids heard the goblins cry :
‘Come buy our orchard fruits,
Come buy, come buy :
Apples and quinces,
Lemons and oranges,
Plump unpecked cherries,
Melons and raspberries,
Bloom-down-cheeked peaches,
Swart-headed mulberries,
Wild free-born cranberries,
Crab-apples, dewberries,
Pine-apples, blackberries,
Apricots, strawberries ;—
All ripe together
In summer weather,—
Morns that pass by,
Fair eves that fly ;
Come buy, come buy :
Our grapes fresh from the vine,
Pomegranates full and fine,
Dates and sharp bullaces,
Rare pears and greengages,
Damsons and bilberries,
Taste them and try :
Currants and gooseberries,
Bright-fire-like barberries,
Figs to fill your mouth,
Citrons from the South,
Sweet to tongue and sound to eye ;
Come buy, come buy.’

Evening by evening
Among the brookside rushes,
Laura bowed her head to hear,
Lizzie veiled her blushes :
Crouching close together
In the cooling weather,
With clasping arms and cautioning
lips,
With tingling cheeks and finger tips.
‘Lie close,’ Laura said,
Pricking up her golden head :
‘We must not look at goblin men,
We must not buy their fruits :
Who knows upon what soil they fed
Their hungry thirsty roots ?’
‘Come buy,’ call the goblins
Hobbling down the glen.
‘Oh,’ cried Lizzie, ‘Laura, Laura,
You should not peep at goblin men.’
Lizzie covered up her eyes,
Covered close lest they should look ;
Laura reared her glossy head,
And whispered like the restless brook :
‘Look, Lizzie, look, Lizzie,
Down the glen tramp little men.
One hauls a basket,
One bears a plate,
One lugs a golden dish
Of many pounds’ weight.
How fair the vine must grow
Whose grapes are so luscious ;
How warm the wind must blow
Through those fruit bushes.’

'No,' said Lizzie: 'No, no, no;
 Their offers should not charm us,
 Their evil gifts would harm us.'
 She thrust a dimpled finger
 In each ear, shut eyes and ran:
 Curious Laura chose to linger
 Wondering at each merchant man.
 One had a cat's face,
 One whisked a tail,
 One tramped at a rat's pace,
 One crawled like a snail,
 One like a wombat prowled obtuse
 and furry,
 One like a ratel tumbled hurry skurry.
 She heard a voice like voice of doves
 Cooing all together:
 They sounded kind and full of loves
 In the pleasant weather.

Laura stretched her gleaming neck
 Like a rush-imbedded swan,
 Like a lily from the beck,
 Like a moonlit poplar branch,
 Like a vessel at the launch
 When its last restraint is gone.

Backwards up the mossy glen
 Turned and trooped the goblin men,
 With their shrill repeated cry,
 'Come buy, come buy.'
 When they reached where Laura was
 They stood stock still upon the moss,
 Leering at each other,
 Brother with queer brother;
 Signalling each other,
 Brother with sly brother.
 One set his basket down,
 One reared his plate;
 One began to weave a crown
 Of tendrils, leaves, and rough nuts
 brown
 (Men sell not such in any town);
 One heaved the golden weight
 Of dish and fruit to offer her:

'Come buy, come buy,' was still
 their cry.
 Laura stared but did not stir,
 Longed but had no money.
 The whisk-tailed merchant bade her
 taste
 In tones as smooth as honey,
 The cat-faced purr'd,
 The rat-paced spoke a word
 Of welcome, and the snail-paced
 even was heard;
 One parrot-voiced and jolly
 Cried 'Pretty Goblin' still for 'Pretty
 Polly';
 One whistled like a bird.

But sweet-tooth Laura spoke in
 haste:

'Good Folk, I have no coin;
 To take were to purloin:
 I have no copper in my purse,
 I have no silver either,
 And all my gold is on the furze
 That shakes in windy weather
 Above the rusty heather.'
 'You have much gold upon your
 head,'

They answered all together:
 'Buy from us with a golden curl.'
 She clipped a precious golden lock,
 She dropped a tear more rare than
 pearl,

Then sucked their fruit globes fair
 or red.

Sweeter than honey from the rock,
 Stronger than man-rejoicing wine,
 Clearer than water flowed that juice;
 She never tasted such before,
 How should it cloy with length of
 use?

She sucked and sucked and sucked
 the more
 Fruits which that unknown orchard
 bore;

She sucked until her lips were sore ;
 Then flung the emptied rinds away
 But gathered up one kernel stone,
 And knew not was it night or day
 As she turned home alone.

Lizzie met her at the gate
 Full of wise upbraidings :
 'Dear, you should not stay so late,
 Twilight is not good for maidens ;
 Should not loiter in the glen
 In the haunts of goblin men.
 Do you not remember Jeanie,
 How she met them in the moonlight,
 Took their gifts both choice and
 many,
 Ate their fruits and wore their
 flowers
 Plucked from bowers
 Where summer ripens at all hours ?
 But ever in the noonlight
 She pined and pined away ;
 Sought them by night and day,
 Found them no more, but dwindled
 and grew grey ;
 Then fell with the first snow,
 While to this day no grass will grow
 Where she lies low :
 I planted daisies there a year ago
 That never blow.
 You should not loiter so.'
 'Nay, hush,' said Laura :
 'Nay, hush, my sister :
 I ate and ate my fill,
 Yet my mouth waters still :
 To-morrow night I will
 Buy more ;' and kissed her.
 'Have done with sorrow ;
 I'll bring you plums to-morrow
 Fresh on their mother twigs,
 Cherries worth getting ;
 You cannot think what figs
 My teeth have met in,
 What melons icy-cold

Piled on a dish of gold
 Too huge for me to hold,
 What peaches with a velvet nap,
 Pellucid grapes without one seed :
 Odorous indeed must be the mead
 Whereon they grow, and pure the
 wave they drink
 With lilies at the brink,
 And sugar-sweet their sap.'

Golden head by golden head,
 Like two pigeons in one nest
 Folded in each other's wings,
 They lay down in their curtained
 bed :
 Like two blossoms on one stem,
 Like two flakes of new-fall'n snow,
 Like two wands of ivory
 Tipped with gold for awful kings.
 Moon and stars gazed in at them,
 Wind sang to them lullaby,
 Lumbering owls forebore to fly,
 Not a bat flapped to and fro
 Round their nest :
 Cheek to cheek and breast to breast
 Locked together in one nest.

Early in the morning
 When the first cock crowed his
 warning,
 Neat like bees, as sweet and busy,
 Laura rose with Lizzie :
 Fetched in honey, milked the cows,
 Aired and set to rights the house,
 Kneaded cakes of whitest wheat,
 Cakes for dainty mouths to eat,
 Next churned butter, whipped up
 cream,
 Fed their poultry, sat and sewed ;
 Talked as modest maidens should :
 Lizzie with an open heart,
 Laura in an absent dream,
 One content, one sick in part ;

One warbling for the mere bright
day's delight,
One longing for the night.

At length slow evening came :
They went with pitchers to the
reedy brook ;
Lizzie most placid in her look,
Laura most like a leaping flame.
They drew the gurgling water from
its deep.

Lizzie plucked purple and rich
golden flags,
Then turning homeward said : ' The
sunset flushes

Those furthest loftiest crags ;
Come, Laura, not another maiden
lags.

No wilful squirrel wags,
The beasts and birds are fast asleep.'
But Laura loitered still among the
rushes,
And said the bank was steep.

And said the hour was early still,
The dew not fall'n, the wind not
chill ;

Listening ever, but not catching
The customary cry,
' Come buy, come buy,'
With its iterated jingle
Of sugar-baited words :
Not for all her watching
Once discerning even one goblin
Racing, whisking, tumbling, hob-
bling—

Let alone the herds
That used to tramp along the glen,
In groups or single,
Of brisk fruit-merchant men.

Till Lizzie urged, ' O Laura, come ;
I hear the fruit-call, but I dare not
look ;

You should not loiter longer at this
brook :

Come with me home.

The stars rise, the moon bends her
arc,

Each glow-worm winks her spark,
Let us ' get home before the night
grows dark :

For clouds may gather
Though this is summer weather,
Put out the lights and drench us
through ;

Then if we lost our way what should
we do ?'

Laura turned cold as stone
To find her sister heard that cry
alone,

That goblin cry,
' Come buy our fruits, come buy.'
Must she then buy no more such
dainty fruit ?

Must she no more such succous
pasture find,
Gone deaf and blind ?

Her tree of life drooped from the
root :

She said not one word in her heart's
sore ache :

But peering thro' the dimness,
nought discerning,

Trudged home, her pitcher dripping
all the way ;

So crept to bed, and lay
Silent till Lizzie slept ;

Then sat up in a passionate yearning,
And gnashed her teeth for baulked
desire, and wept

As if her heart would break.

Day after day, night after night,
Laura kept watch in vain
In sullen silence of exceeding pain.

She never caught again the goblin
cry,

‘Come buy, come buy;’—

She never spied the goblin men
Hawking their fruits along the glen :
But when the noon waxed bright
Her hair grew thin and grey ;
She dwindled, as the fair full moon
doth turn

To swift decay and burn
Her fire away.

One day remembering her kernel-
stone

She set it by a wall that faced the
south ;

Dewed it with tears, hoped for a
root,

Watched for a waxing shoot,

But there came none.

It never saw the sun,

It never felt the trickling moisture
run :

While with sunk eyes and faded
mouth

She dreamed of melons, as a
traveller sees

False waves in desert drouth

With shade of leaf-crowned trees,

And burns the thirstier in the sand-
ful breeze.

She no more swept the house,

Tended the fowls or cows,

Fetchd honey, kneaded cakes of
wheat,

Brought water from the brook :

But sat down listless in the chimney-
nook

And would not eat.

Tender Lizzie could not bear

To watch her sister's cankerous care,

Yet not to share.

She night and morning

Caught the goblins' cry :

‘Come buy our orchard fruits,

Come buy, come buy :’—

Beside the brook, along the glen,

She heard the tramp of goblin men,

The voice and stir

Poor Laura could not hear ;

Longed to buy fruit to comfort her,

But feared to pay too dear.

She thought of Jeanie in her grave,

Who should have been a bride ;

But who for joys brides hope to have

Fell sick and died

In her gay prime,

In earliest winter time,

With the first glazing rime,

With the first snow-fall of crisp
winter time.

Till Laura dwindling

Seemed knocking at Death's door.

Then Lizzie weighed no more

Better and worse ;

But put a silver penny in her purse,

Kissed Laura, crossed the heath
with clumps of furze

At twilight, halted by the brook :

And for the first time in her life

Began to listen and look.

Laughed every goblin

When they spied her peeping :

Came towards her hobbling,

Flying, running, leaping,

Puffing and blowing,

Chuckling, clapping, crowing,

Clucking and gobbling,

Mopping and mowing,

Full of airs and graces,

Pulling wry faces,

Demure grimaces,

Cat-like and rat-like,

Ratel- and wombat-like,

Snail-paced in a hurry,
 Parrot-voiced and whistler,
 Helter skelter, hurry skurry,
 Chattering like magpies,
 Fluttering like pigeons,
 Gliding like fishes,—
 Hugged her and kissed her :
 Squeezed and caressed her :
 Stretched up their dishes,
 Panniers, and plates :
 ‘ Look at our apples
 Russet and dun,
 Bob at our cherries,
 Bite at our peaches,
 Citrons and dates,
 Grapes for the asking,
 Pears red with basking
 Out in the sun,
 Plums on their twigs ;
 Pluck them and suck them,—
 Pomegranates, figs.’

‘ Good folk,’ said Lizzie,
 Mindful of Jeanie :
 ‘ Give me much and many : ’
 Held out her apron,
 Tossed them her penny.
 ‘ Nay, take a seat with us,
 Honour and eat with us,’
 They answered grinning :
 ‘ Our feast is but beginning.
 Night yet is early,
 Warm and dew-pearly,
 Wakeful and starry :
 Such fruits as these
 No man can carry ;
 Half their bloom would fly,
 Half their dew would dry,
 Half their flavour would pass by.
 Sit down and feast with us,
 Be welcome guest with us,
 Cheer you and rest with us.’—
 ‘ Thank you,’ said Lizzie : ‘ But one
 waits

At home alone for me :
 So without further parleying,
 If you will not sell me any
 Of your fruits though much and many,
 Give me back my silver penny
 I tossed you for a fee.’—
 They began to scratch their pates,
 No longer wagging, purring,
 But visibly demurring,
 Grunting and snarling.
 One called her proud,
 Cross-grained, uncivil ;
 Their tones waxed loud,
 Their looks were evil.
 Lashing their tails
 They trod and hustled her,
 Elbowed and jostled her,
 Clawed with their nails,
 Barking, mewing, hissing, mocking,
 Tore her gown and soiled her
 stocking,
 Twitched her hair out by the roots,
 Stamped upon her tender feet,
 Held her hands and squeezed their
 fruits
 Against her mouth to make her eat.

White and golden Lizzie stood,
 Like a lily in a flood,—
 Like a rock of blue-veined stone
 Lashed by tides obstreperously,—
 Like a beacon left alone
 In a hoary roaring sea,
 Sending up a golden fire,—
 Like a fruit-crowned orange-tree
 White with blossoms honey-sweet
 Sore beset by wasp and bee,—
 Like a royal virgin town
 Topped with gilded dome and spire
 Close beleaguered by a fleet
 Mad to tug her standard down.

One may lead a horse to water,
 Twenty cannot make him drink.

Though the goblins cuffed and caught
her,
Coaxed and fought her,
Bullied and besought her,
Scratched her, pinched her black as
ink,

Kicked and knocked her,
Mauled and mocked her,
Lizzie uttered not a word ;
Would not open lip from lip
Lest they should cram a mouthful in :
But laughed in heart to feel the drip
Of juice that syruiped all her face,
And lodged in dimples of her chin,
And streaked her neck which quaked
like curd.

At last the evil people,
Worn out by her resistance,
Flung back her penny, kicked their
fruit

Along whichever road they took,
Not leaving root or stone or shoot ;
Some writhed into the ground,
Some dived into the brook
With ring and ripple,
Some scudded on the gale without a
sound,
Some vanished in the distance.

In a smart, ache, tingle,
Lizzie went her way ;
Knew not was it night or day ;
Sprang' up the bank, tore thro' the
furze,

Threaded copse and dingle,
And heard her penny jingle
Bouncing in her purse,—
Its bounce was music to her ear.
She ran and ran
As if she feared some goblin man
Dogged her with gibe or curse
Or something worse :
But not one goblin skurried after,
Nor was she pricked by fear ;

The kind heart made her windy-paced
That urged her home quite out of
breath with haste
And inward laughter.

She cried, 'Laura,' up the garden,
'Did you miss me ?
Come and kiss me.
Never mind my bruises,
Hug me, kiss me, suck my juices
Squeezed from goblin fruits for you,
Goblin pulp and goblin dew.
Eat me, drink me, love me ;
Laura, make much of me ;
For your sake I have braved the glen
And had to do with goblin merchant
men.'

Laura started from her chair,
Flung her arms up in the air,
Clutched her hair :
'Lizzie, Lizzie, have you tasted
For my sake the fruit forbidden ?
Must your light like mine be hidden,
Your young life like mine be wasted,
Undone in mine undoing,
And ruined in my ruin,
Thirsty, cankered, goblin-ridden?'—
She clung about her sister,
Kissed and kissed and kissed her :
Tears once again
Refreshed her shrunken eyes,
Dropping like rain
After long sultry drouth ;
Shaking with aguish fear, and pain,
She kissed and kissed her with a
hungry mouth.

Her lips began to scorch,
That juice was wormwood to her
tongue,
She loathed the feast :
Writhing as one possessed she leaped
and sung,
Rent all her robe, and wrung

Her hands in lamentable haste,
 And beat her breast.
 Her locks streamed like the torch
 Borne by a racer at full speed,
 Or like the mane of horses in their
 flight,
 Or like an eagle when she stems the
 light
 Straight toward the sun,
 Or like a caged thing freed,
 Or like a flying flag when armies run.

Swift fire spread through her veins,
 knocked at her heart,
 Met the fire smouldering there
 And overbore its lesser flame ;
 She gorged on bitterness without a
 name :

Ah fool, to choose such part
 Of soul-consuming care !
 Sense failed in the mortal strife :
 Like the watch-tower of a town
 Which an earthquake shatters down,
 Like a lightning-stricken mast,
 Like a wind-uprooted tree
 Spun about,
 Like a foam-topped waterspout
 Cast down headlong in the sea,
 She fell at last ;
 Pleasure past and anguish past,
 Is it death or is it life ?

Life out of death.

That night long Lizzie watched by
 her,
 Counted her pulse's flagging stir,
 Felt for her breath,
 Held water to her lips, and cooled
 her face
 With tears and fanning leaves.
 But when the first birds chirped
 about their eaves,
 And early reapers plodded to the
 place

Of golden sheaves,
 And dew-wet grass
 Bowed in the morning winds so brisk
 to pass,
 And new buds with new day
 Opened of cup-like lilies on the
 stream,
 Laura awoke as from a dream,
 Laughed in the innocent old way,
 Hugged Lizzie but not twice or
 thrice ;
 Her gleaming locks showed not one
 thread of grey,
 Her breath was sweet as May,
 And light danced in her eyes.

Days, weeks, months, years
 Afterwards, when both were wives
 With children of their own ;
 Their mother-hearts beset with fears,
 Their lives bound up in tender lives ;
 Laura would call the little ones
 And tell them of her early prime,
 Those pleasant days long gone
 Of not-returning time :
 Would talk about the haunted glen,
 The wicked quaint fruit-merchant
 men,
 Their fruits like honey to the throat
 But poison in the blood
 (Men sell not such in any town) :
 Would tell them how her sister
 stood

In deadly peril to do her good,
 And win the fiery antidote :
 Then joining hands to little hands
 Would bid them cling together,—
 ' For there is no friend like a sister
 In calm or stormy weather ;
 To cheer one on the tedious way,
 To fetch one if one goes astray,
 To lift one if one totters down,
 To strengthen whilst one stands.'

27 April 1859.

REPINING

SHE sat alway through the long day
Spinning the weary thread away ;
And ever said in undertone,
'Come, that I be no more alone.'

From early dawn to set of sun
Working, her task was still undone ;
And the long thread seemed to increase
Even while she spun and did not cease.

She heard the gentle turtle-dove
Tell to its mate a tale of love ;
She saw the glancing swallows fly,
Ever a social company ;
She knew each bird upon its nest
Had cheering songs to bring it rest ;
None lived alone save only she :—
The wheel went round more wearily ;
She wept and said in undertone,
'Come, that I be no more alone.'

Day followed day and still she sighed
For love, and was not satisfied ;
Until one night, when the moonlight
Turned all the trees to silver-white,
She heard, what ne'er she heard before,

A steady hand undo the door.
The nightingale since set of sun
Her throbbing music had not done,
And she had listened silently ;
But now the wind had changed, and she
Heard the sweet song no more, but heard
Beside her bed a whispered word :
'Damsel, rise up ; be not afraid ;
For I am come at last,' it said.

She trembled, though the voice was mild ;

She trembled like a frightened child ;—

Till she looked up, and then she saw
The unknown speaker without awe.
He seemed a fair young man, his eyes
Beaming with serious charities ;
His cheek was white but hardly pale ;
And a dim glory like a veil
Hovered about his head, and shone
Through the whole room till night
was gone.

So her fear fled ; and then she said,
Leaning upon her quiet bed :
'Now thou art come, I prythee stay,
That I may see thee in the day,
And learn to know thy voice, and hear
It evermore calling me near.'

He answered, 'Rise and follow me.
But she looked upwards wonderingly :
'And whither wouldst thou go,
friend ? stay
Until the dawning of the day.'
But he said : 'The wind ceaseth,
Maid ;
Of chill nor damp be thou afraid.'

She bound her hair up from the floor,
And passed in silence from the door.

So they went forth together, he
Helping her forward tenderly.
The hedges bowed beneath his hand ;
Forth from the streams came the dry land
As they passed over ; evermore
The pallid moonbeams shone before ;
And the wind hushed, and nothing stirred ;

Not even a solitary bird,
Scared by their footsteps, fluttered by
Where aspen-trees stood steadily.

As they went on, at length a sound
Came trembling on the air around ;
The undistinguishable hum
Of life, voices that go and come
Of busy men, and the child's sweet
High laugh, and noise of trampling
feet.

Then he said, 'Wilt thou go and
see ?'

And she made answer joyfully :
'The noise of life, of human life,
Of dear communion without strife,
Of converse held 'twixt friend and
friend ;

Is it not here our path shall end ?'
He led her on a little way
Until they reached a hillock : 'Stay.'

It was a village in a plain.
High mountains screened it from the
rain
And stormy wind ; and nigh at hand
A bubbling streamlet flowed o'er
sand

Pebbly and fine, and sent life up
Green succous stalk and flower-cup.

Gradually, day's harbinger,
A chilly wind began to stir.
It seemed a gentle powerless breeze
That scarcely rustled through the
trees ;

And yet it touched the mountain's
head

And the paths man might never
tread.

But hearken : in the quiet weather
Do all the streams flow down to-
gether ?—

No, 'tis a sound more terrible
Than though a thousand rivers fell.
The everlasting ice and snow
Were loosened then, but not to flow ;—
With a loud crash like solid thunder
The avalanche came, burying under
The village ; turning life and breath
And rest and joy and plans to
death.

'Oh let us fly, for pity fly !
Let us go hence, friend, thou and I.
There must be many regions yet
Where these things make not
desolate.'

He looked upon her seriously ;
Then said : 'Arise and follow me.'
The path that lay before them was
Nigh covered over with long grass ;
And many slimy things and slow
Trailed on between the roots below.
The moon looked dimmer than
before ;

And shadowy cloudlets floating o'er
Its face sometimes quite hid its light,
And filled the skies with deeper night.

At last, as they went on, the noise
Was heard of the sea's mighty voice ;
And soon the ocean could be seen
In its long restlessness serene.
Upon its breast a vessel rode
That drowsily appeared to nod
As the great billows rose and fell,
And swelled to sink, and sank to
swell.

Meanwhile the strong wind had
come forth
From the chill regions of the North,
The mighty wind invisible.
And the low waves began to swell ;
And the sky darkened overhead ;

And the moon once looked forth,
then fled

Behind dark clouds ; while here and
there

The lightning shone out in the air,
And the approaching thunder rolled
With angry peelings manifold.

How many vows were made, and
prayers

That in safe times were cold and
scarce !

Still all availed not ; and at length
The waves arose in all their strength,
And fought against the ship, and
filled

The ship. Then were the clouds
unsealed,

And the rain hurried forth, and beat
On every side and over it.

Some clung together, and some kept
A long stern silence, and some wept.
Many half crazed looked on in
wonder

As the strong timbers rent asunder ;
Friends forgot friends, foes fled to
foes ;—

And still the water rose and rose.

‘ Ah woe is me ! Whom I have seen
Are now as though they had not been.
In the earth there is room for birth,
And there are graves enough in
earth ;

Why should the cold sea, tempest-
torn,

Bury those whom it hath not borne ?’

He answered not, and they went on.
The glory of the heavens was gone ;
The moon gleamed not nor any star ;
Cold winds were rustling near and far,
And from the trees the dry leaves fell
With a sad sound unspeakable.

The air was cold ; till from the South
A gust blew hot, like sudden drouth,
Into their faces ; and a light,
Glowing and red, shone through the
night.

A mighty city full of flame
And death and sounds without a
name.

Amid the black and blinding smoke,
The people, as one man, awoke.

Oh happy they who yesterday
On the long journey went away !

Whose pallid lips, smiling and chill,
While the flames scorch them smile
on still ;

Who murmur not, who tremble not
When the bier crackles fiery hot ;
Who dying said in love’s increase,
‘ Lord, let thy servant part in peace.’

Those in the town could see and hear
A shaded river flowing near ;

The broad deep bed could hardly
hold

Its plenteous waters calm and cold.
Was flame-wrapt all the city wall,
The city gates were flame-wrapt all.

What was man’s strength, what
puissance then ?

Women were mighty as strong men.
Some knelt in prayer, believing still,
Resigned into a righteous will,
Bowing beneath the chastening rod,
Lost to the world, but found of
God.

Some prayed for friend, for child,
for wife ;

Some prayed for faith ; some prayed
for life ;

While some, proud even in death,
hope gone,

Steadfast and still, stood looking on.

'Death—death—oh let us fly from death!

Where'er we go it followeth ;
All these are dead ; and we alone
Remain to weep for what is gone.
What is this thing ? thus hurriedly
To pass into eternity ;
To leave the earth so full of mirth ;
To lose the profit of our birth ;
To die and be no more ; to cease,
Having numbness that is not peace.
Let us go hence ; and, even if thus
Death everywhere must go with us,
Let us not see the change, but see
Those who have been or still shall be.'

He sighed, and they went on together.
Beneath their feet did the grass
wither ;

Across the heaven high overhead
Dark misty clouds floated and fled ;
And in their bosom was the thunder,
And angry lightnings flashed out
under,
Forked and red and menacing ;
Far off the wind was muttering ;
It seemed to tell, not understood,
Strange secrets to the listening
wood.

Upon its wings it bore the scent
Of blood of a great armament :
Then saw they how on either side
Fields were down-trodden far and
wide.

That morning at the break of day
Two nations had gone forth to slay.

As a man soweth so he reaps.
The field was full of bleeding heaps ;
Ghastly corpses of men and horses
That met death at a thousand sources ;
Cold limbs and putrefying flesh ;
Long love-locks clotted to a mesh

That stifled : stiffened mouths be-
neath
Staring eyes that had looked on death.

But these were dead : these felt no
more

The anguish of the wounds they bore.
Behold, they shall not sigh again,
Nor justly fear, nor hope in vain.
What if none wept above them ?—is
The sleeper less at rest for this ?
Is not the young child's slumber sweet
When no man watcheth over it ?

These had deep calm ; but all around
There was a deadly smothered sound,
The choking cry of agony
From wounded men who could not
die ;

Who watched the black wing of the
raven

Rise like a cloud 'twixt them and
heaven,
And in the distance flying fast
Beheld the eagle come at last.

She knelt down in her agony.

'O Lord, it is enough,' said she :
'My heart's prayer putteth me to
shame ;

Let me return to whence I came.

Thou who for love's sake didst re-
prove,

Forgive me for the sake of love.'

December 1847.

THREE NUNS

I

Sospira questo core,
E non so dir perchè.

SHADOW, shadow on the wall,
Spread thy shelter over me ;

Wrap me with a heavy pall,
 With the dark that none may see :
 Fold thyself around me, come ;
 Shut out all the troublesome
 Noise of life ; I would be dumb.

Shadow, thou hast reached my feet ;
 Rise and cover up my head ;
 Be my stainless winding-sheet,
 Buried before I am dead.
 Lay thy cool upon my breast :
 Once I thought that joy was best,
 Now I only care for rest.

By the grating of my cell
 Sings a solitary bird ;
 Sweeter than the vesper bell,
 Sweetest song was ever heard.¹
 Sing upon thy living tree ;
 Happy echoes answer thee ;
 Happy songster, sing to me.

When my yellow hair was curled,
 Though men saw and called me
 fair,
 I was weary in the world
 Full of vanity and care.
 Gold was left behind, curls shorn,
 When I came here ; that same morn
 Made a bride no gems adorn.

Here wrapt in my spotless veil,
 Curtained from intruding eyes,
 I whom prayers and fasts turn pale
 Wait the flush of Paradise.
 But the vigil is so long
 My heart sickens :—sing thy song,
 Blythe bird that canst do no wrong.

Sing on, making me forget
 Present sorrow and past sin.

¹ "Sweetest eyes were ever seen."
 E. B. BROWNING.

Sing a little longer yet :
 Soon the matins will begin ;
 And I must turn back again
 To that aching, worse than pain,—
 I must bear and not complain.

Sing ; that in thy song I may
 Dream myself once more a child
 In the green woods far away,
 Plucking clematis and wild
 Hyacinths, till pleasure grew
 Tired, yet so was pleasure too,
 Resting with no work to do.

In the thickest of the wood
 I remember long ago
 How a stately oaktree stood
 With a sluggish pool below
 Almost shadowed out of sight ;
 On the waters dark as night
 Water-lilies lay like light.

There, while yet a child, I thought
 I could live as in a dream ;
 Secret, neither found, not sought ;
 Till the lilies on the stream,
 Pure as virgin purity,
 Would seem scarce too pure for me :—
 Ah but that can never be !

II

Sospirerà d' amore,
 Ma non lo dice a me.

I loved him ; yes, where was the sin ?
 I loved him with my heart and soul ;
 But I pressed forward to no goal,
 There was no prize I strove to win.
 Show me my sin that I may see :
 Throw the first stone, thou Pharisee.

I loved him, but I never sought
 That he should know that I was
 fair.

I prayed for him ; was my sin
 prayer ?
 I sacrificed, he never bought ;
 He nothing gave, he nothing took ;
 We never bartered look for look.

My voice rose in the sacred choir,
 The choir of nuns : do you condemn
 Even if when kneeling among
 them
 Faith, zeal, and love, kindled a fire,
 And I prayed for his happiness
 Who knew not ? was my error this ?

I only prayed that in the end
 His trust and hope may not be
 vain ;

I prayed not we may meet again :
 I would not let our names ascend,
 No not to Heaven, in the same
 breath ;
 Nor will I join the two in death.

Oh sweet is death, for I am weak
 And weary, and it giveth rest.
 The crucifix lies on my breast,
 And all night long it seems to speak
 Of rest ; I hear it through my sleep,
 And the great comfort makes me
 weep.

Oh sweet is death that bindeth up
 The broken and the bleeding
 heart.

The draught chilled, but a cordial
 part
 Lurked at the bottom of the cup ;
 And for my patience will my Lord
 Give an exceeding great reward.

Yea the reward is almost won,
 A crown of glory and a palm.

Soon I shall sing the unknown
 psalm ;
 Soon gaze on light, not on the sun ;
 And soon with surer faith shall pray
 For him, and cease not night nor
 day.

My life is breaking like a cloud—
 God judgeth not as man doth
 judge—
 Nay, bear with me : you need not
 grudge
 This peace ; the vows that I have
 vowed
 Have all been kept : Eternal Strength
 Holds me, though mine own fails at
 length.

Bury me in the Convent-ground
 Among the flowers that are so
 sweet ;
 And lay a green turf at my feet,
 Where thick trees cast a gloom
 around ;
 At my head let a cross be, white
 Through the long blackness of the
 night.

Now kneel and pray beside my bed
 That I may sleep being free from
 pain ;
 And pray that I may wake again
 After His likeness who hath said
 (Faithful is He who promiseth)
 We shall be satisfied therewith.

III

Rispondimi, cor mio,
 Perchè sospiri tu ?
 Risponde : Voglio Dio,
 Sospiro per Gesù.

My heart is as a freeborn bird
 Caged in my cruel breast,

That flutters, flutters evermore,
Nor sings nor is at rest,
But beats against the prison bars,
As knowing its own nest
Far off beyond the clouded west.

My soul is as a hidden fount
Shut in by clammy clay
That struggles with an upward moan,
Striving to force its way
Up through the turf, over the grass,
Up up into the day
Where twilight no more turneth grey.

Oh for the grapes of the True Vine
Growing in Paradise,
Whose tendrils join the Tree of Life
To that which maketh wise—
Growing beside the Living Well
Whose sweetest waters rise
Where tears are wiped from tearful
eyes !

Oh for the waters of that Well
Round which the Angels stand—
Oh for the Shadow of the Rock
On my heart's weary land—
Oh for the Voice to guide me when
I turn to either hand,
Guiding me till I reach heaven's
strand !

Thou world from which I am come
out,
Keep all thy gems and gold ;
Keep thy delights and precious
things,
Thou that art waxing old.
My heart shall beat with a new life
When thine is dead and cold ;
When thou dost fear I shall be bold.

When Earth shall pass away with all
Her pride and pomp of sin,

The City builded without hands
Shall safely shut me in.
All the rest is but vanity
Which others strive to win :
Where their hopes end my joys
begin.

I will not look upon a rose
Though it is fair to see :
The flowers planted in Paradise
Are budding now for me :
Red roses like love visible
Are blowing on their tree,
Or white like virgin purity.

I will not look unto the sun
Which setteth night by night :
In the untrodden courts of heaven
My crown shall be more bright.
Lo in the New Jerusalem
Founded and built aright
My very feet shall tread on light.

With foolish riches of this world
I have bought treasure where
Nought perisheth : for this white
veil
I gave my golden hair ;
I gave the beauty of my face
For vigils, fasts, and prayer ;
I gave all for this cross I bear.

My heart trembled when first I took
The vows which must be kept.
At first it was a weariness
To watch when once I slept :
The path was rough and sharp with
thorns ;
My feet bled as I stepped ;
The cross was heavy and I wept.

While still the names rang in mine
ears
Of daughter, sister, wife,

The outside world still looked so
fair

To my weak eyes, and rife
With beauty, my heart almost failed;
Then in the desperate strife
I prayed, as one who prays for life,—

Until I grew to love what once
Had been so burdensome.
So now, when I am faint because
Hope deferred seems to numb
My heart, I yet can plead, and say,
Although my lips are dumb—
The Spirit and the Bride say, Come.

12 February 1849 to 10 May 1850.

THE LOWEST ROOM

LIKE flowers sequestered from the
sun

And wind of summer, day by day
I dwindled paler, whilst my hair
Showed the first tinge of grey.

‘Oh what is life, that we should
live?

Or what is death, that we must
die?

A bursting bubble is our life :
I also, what am I ?’

‘What is your grief? now tell me,
sweet,

That I may grieve,’ my sister
said ;

And stayed a white embroidering
hand

And raised a golden head :

Her tresses showed a richer mass,
Her eyes looked softer than my
own ;

Her figure had a statelier height,
Her voice a tenderer tone.

‘Some must be second and not first ;
All cannot be the first of all :
Is not this too but vanity ?
I stumble like to fall.

‘So yesterday I read the acts
Of Hector and each clangorous
king
With wrathful great Æacides :—
Old Homer leaves a sting.’

The comely face looked up again,
The deft hand lingered on the
thread.

‘Sweet, tell me what is Homer’s
sting,
Old Homer’s sting,’ she said.

‘He stirs my sluggish pulse like
wine,

He melts me like the wind of spice,
Strong as strong Ajax’ red right
hand,
And grand like Juno’s eyes.

‘I cannot melt the sons of men,
I cannot fire and tempest-toss :—
Besides, those days were golden days,
Whilst these are days of dross.’

She laughed a feminine low laugh,
Yet did not stay her dexterous
hand :

‘Now tell me of those days,’ she
said,
‘When time ran golden sand.’

‘Then men were men of might and
right,
Sheer might, at least, and weighty
swords :

Then men in open blood and fire
Bore witness to their words—

‘Crest-rearing kings with whistling
spears ;

But if these shivered in the shock
They wrenched up hundred-rooted
trees,

Or hurled the effacing rock.

‘Then hand to hand, then foot to
foot,

Stern to the death-grip grappling
then,

Who ever thought of gunpowder
Amongst these men of men ?

‘They knew whose hand struck home
the death,

They knew who broke but would
not bend,
Could venerate an equal foe
And scorn a laggard friend.

‘Calm in the utmost stress of doom,
Devout toward adverse powers
above,

They hated with intenser hate
And loved with fuller love.

‘Then heavenly beauty could allay
As heavenly beauty stirred the
strife :

By them a slave was worshipped
more
Than is by us a wife.’

She laughed again, my sister laughed ;
Made answer o’er the laboured
cloth,

‘I rather would be one of us
Than wife, or slave, or both.’

‘Oh better then be slave or wife
Than fritter now blank life away :
Then night had holiness of night,
And day was sacred day.

R

‘The princess laboured at her loom,
Mistress and handmaiden alike ;
Beneath their needles grew the field
With warriors armed to strike.

‘Or, look again, dim Dian’s face
Gleamed perfect through the at-
tendant night ;
Were such not better than those
holes
Amid that waste of white ?

‘A shame it is, our aimless life ;
I rather from my heart would feed
From silver dish in gilded stall
With wheat and wine the steed,

‘The faithful steed that bore my lord
In safety through the hostile land,
The faithful steed that arched his
neck
To fondle with my hand.’

Her needle erred ; a moment’s pause,
A moment’s patience, all was well.
Then she : ‘But just suppose the
horse,
Suppose the rider fell ?

‘Then captive in an alien house,
Hungering on exile’s bitter
bread,—
They happy, they who won the lot
Of sacrifice,’ she said.

Speaking she faltered, while her look
Showed forth her passion like a
glass ;
With hand suspended, kindling eye,
Flushed cheek, how fair she
was !

‘Ah well, be those the days of dross ;
This, if you will, the age of gold :

C

Yet had those days a spark of
warmth,

While these are somewhat
cold—

‘Are somewhat mean and cold and
slow,

Are stunted from heroic growth :
We gain but little when we prove
The worthlessness of both.’

‘But life is in our hands,’ she said :
‘In our own hands for gain or
loss :

Shall not the Sevenfold Sacred Fire
Suffice to purge our dross ?

‘Too short a century of dreams,
One day of work sufficient length ;
Why should not you, why should
not I,
Attain heroic strength ?

‘Our life is given us as a blank ;
Ourselves must make it blest or
curst :

Who dooms me I shall only be
The second, not the first ?

‘Learn from old Homer, if you will,
Such wisdom as his books have
said :

In one the acts of Ajax shine,
In one of Diomed.

‘Honoured all heroes whose high
deeds

Through life, through death, en-
large their span ;
Only Achilles in his rage
And sloth is less than man.’

‘Achilles only less than man ?
He less than man who, half a god,

Discomfited all Greece with rest,
Cowed Ilion with a nod ?

‘He offered vengeance, lifelong grief
To one dear ghost, uncounted
price :

Beasts, Trojans, adverse gods, himself,
Heaped up the sacrifice.

‘Self-immolated to his friend,
Shrined in world’s wonder, Homer’s
page,

Is this the man, the less than men
Of this degenerate age ?’

‘Gross from his acorns, tusky boar
Does memorable acts like his ;
So for her snared offended young
Bleeds the swart lioness.’

But here she paused ; our eyes had
met,

And I was whitening with the jeer ;
She rose ; ‘I went too far,’ she said ;
Spoke low ; ‘Forgive me, dear.

‘To me our days seem pleasant days,
Our home a haven of pure content ;
Forgive me if I said too much,
So much more than I meant.

‘Homer, though greater than his
gods,

With rough-hewn virtues was
sufficed

And rough-hewn men : but what are
such

To us who learn of Christ ?’

The much-moved pathos of her voice,
Her almost tearful eyes, her cheek
Grown pale, confessed the strength
of love

Which only made her speak :

For mild she was, of few soft
words,
Most gentle, easy to be led,
Content to listen when I spoke
And reverence what I said ;

I elder sister by six years ;
Not half so glad, or wise, or
good :
Her words rebuked my secret self
And shamed me where I stood.

She never guessed her words re-
proved
A silent envy nursed within,
A selfish, souring discontent,
Pride-born, the devil's sin.

I smiled, half bitter, half in jest :
'The wisest man of all the wise
Left for his summary of life
"Vanity of vanities."

'Beneath the sun there's nothing
new :
Men flow, men ebb, mankind
flows on :

If I am wearied of my life,
Why so was Solomon.

'Vanity of vanities he preached
Of all he found, of all he sought :
Vanities of vanities, the gist
Of all the words he taught.

'This in the wisdom of the world,
In Homer's page, in all, we find :
As the sea is not filled, so yearns
Man's universal mind.

'This Homer felt, who gave his men
With glory but a transient state :
His very Jove could not reverse
Irrevocable fate,

'Uncertain all their lot save this—
Who wins must lose, who lives
must die :
All trodden out into the dark
Alike, all vanity.'

She scarcely answered when I paused
But rather to herself said : 'One
Is here,' low-voiced and loving, 'yea,
Greater than Solomon.'

So both were silent, she and I :
She laid her work aside, and went
Into the garden-walks, like Spring,
All gracious with content ;

A little graver than her wont,
Because her words had fretted me ;
Not warbling quite her merriest tune
Bird-like from tree to tree.

I chose a book to read and dream :
Yet half the while with furtive eyes
Marked how she made her choice of
flowers
Intuitively wise,

And ranged them with instinctive
taste
Which all my books had failed to
teach ;
Fresh rose herself, and daintier
Than blossom of the peach.

By birthright higher than myself,
Though nestling of the self-same
nest :
No fault of hers, no fault of mine,
But stubborn to digest.

I watched her, till my book unmarked
Slid noiseless to the velvet floor ;
Till all the opulent summer-world
Looked poorer than before.

Just then her busy fingers ceased,
Her fluttered colour went and
came :

I knew whose step was on the walk,
Whose voice would name her
name.

* * * * *
Well, twenty years have passed since
then :

My sister now, a stately wife
Still fair, looks back in peace and sees
The longer half of life—

The longer half of prosperous life,
With little grief, or fear, or fret :
She, loved and loving long ago,
Is loved and loving yet.

A husband honourable, brave,
Is her main wealth in all the world :
And next to him one like herself,
One daughter golden-curved ;

Fair image of her own fair youth,
As beautiful and as serene,
With almost such another love
As her own love has been.

Yet, though of world-wide charity,
And in her home most tender
dove,

Her treasure and her heart are stored
In the home-land of love :

She thrives, God's blessed husbandry ;
Most like a vine which full of
fruit

Doth cling and lean and climb
toward heaven
While earth still binds its root.

I sit and watch my sister's face :
How little altered since the hours
When she, a kind light-hearted girl,
Gathered her garden flowers,

Her song just mellowed by regret
For having teased me with her
talk ;

Then all-forgotten as she heard
One step upon the walk.

While I ? I sat alone and watched ;
My lot in life, to live alone
In mine own world of interests,
Much felt but little shown.

Not to be first : how hard to learn
That lifelong lesson of the past ;
Line graven on line and stroke on
stroke,
But, thank God, learned at
last.

So now in patience I possess
My soul year after tedious year,
Content to take the lowest place,
The place assigned me here.

Yet sometimes, when I feel my
strength
Most weak, and life most burden-
some,

I lift mine eyes up to the hills
From whence my help shall
come :

Yea, sometimes still I lift my heart
To the Archangelic trumpet-burst,
When all deep secrets shall be shown,
And many last be first.

30 September 1856.

FROM HOUSE TO HOME

THE first was like a dream through
summer heat,
The second like a tedious numbing
swoon

While the half-frozen pulses lagged
to beat
Beneath a winter moon.

‘But,’ says my friend, ‘what was
this thing and where?’

It was a pleasure-place within my
soul ;
An earthly paradise supremely fair
That lured me from the goal.

The first part was a tissue of hugged
lies ;

The second was its ruin fraught
with pain :

Why raise the fair delusion to the
skies
But to be dashed again ?

My castle stood of white transparent
glass

Glittering and frail with many a
fretted spire,

But when the summer sunset came
to pass
It kindled into fire.

My pleasaunce was an undulating
green,

Stately with trees whose shadows
slept below,

With glimpses of smooth garden-
beds between

Like flame or sky or snow.

Swift squirrels on the pastures took
their ease,

With leaping lambs safe from the
unfeared knife ;

All singing-birds rejoicing in those
trees

Fulfilled their careless life.

Woodpigeons cooed there, stock-
doves nestled there ;

My trees were full of songs and
flowers and fruit ;

Their branches spread a city to the
air

And mice lodged in their root.

My heath lay farther off, where
lizards lived

In strange metallic mail, just spied
and gone ;

Like darted lightnings here and there
perceived

But nowhere dwelt upon.

Frogs and fat toads were there to
hop or plod

And propagate in peace, an un-
couth crew,

Where velvet-headed rushes rustling
nod

And spill the morning dew.

All caterpillars throve beneath my
rule,

With snails and slugs in corners
out of sight ;

I never marred the curious sudden
stool

That perfects in a night.

Safe in his excavated gallery

The burrowing mole groped on
from year to year ;

No harmless hedgehog curled be-
cause of me

His prickly back for fear.

Oft-times one like an angel walked
with me,

With spirit-discerning eyes like
flames of fire

But deep as the unfathomed endless
sea,

Fulfilling my desire :

<p>And sometimes like a snowdrift he was fair, And sometimes like a sunset glorious red, And sometimes he had wings to scale the air With aureole round his head.</p> <p>We sang our songs together by the way, Calls and recalls and echoes of delight ; So communed we together all the day, And so in dreams by night.</p> <p>I have no words to tell what way we walked, What unforgotten path now closed and sealed :</p> <p>I have no words to tell all things we talked, All things that he revealed :</p> <p>This only can I tell : that hour by hour I waxed more feastful, lifted up and glad ; I felt no thorn-prick when I plucked a flower, Felt not my friend was sad.</p> <p>‘To-morrow,’ once I said to him with smiles. ‘To-night,’ he answered gravely ; and was dumb, But pointed out the stones that numbered miles And miles and miles to come.</p> <p>‘Not so,’ I said : ‘to-morrow shall be sweet : To-night is not so sweet as coming days.’</p>	<p>Then first I saw that he had turned his feet, Had turned from me his face :</p> <p>Running and flying miles and miles he went, But once looked back to beckon with his hand, And cry : ‘Come home, O love, from banishment : Come to the distant land.’</p> <p>That night destroyed me like an avalanche ; One night turned all my summer back to snow : Next morning not a bird upon my branch, Not a lamb woke below,—</p> <p>No bird, no lamb, no living breath- ing thing ; No squirrel scampered on my breezy lawn, No mouse lodged by his hoard : all joys took wing And fled before that dawn.</p> <p>Azure and sun were starved from heaven above, No dew had fallen, but biting frost lay hoar : O love, I knew that I should meet my love, Should find my love no more.</p> <p>‘My love no more,’ I muttered, stunned with pain : I shed no tear, I wrung no passionate hand, Till something whispered : ‘You shall meet again, Meet in a distant land.’</p>
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Then with a cry like famine I arose,
 I lit my candle, searched from
 room to room,
 Searched up and down; a war of
 winds that froze
 Swept through the blank of gloom.

I searched day after day, night after
 night;
 Scant change there came to me
 of night or day:
 'No more,' I wailed, 'no more:'
 and trimmed my light,
 And gnashed but did not pray,

Until my heart broke and my spirit
 broke:
 Upon the frost-bound floor I
 stumbled, fell,
 And moaned: 'It is enough: with-
 hold the stroke.
 Farewell, O love, farewell.'

Then life swooned from me. And
 I heard the song
 Of spheres and spirits rejoicing
 over me:
 One cried: 'Our sister, she hath
 suffered long.'—
 One answered: 'Make her see.'

One cried: 'Oh blessèd she who
 no more pain,
 Who no more disappointment
 shall receive.'—
 One answered: 'Not so: she must
 live again;
 Strengthen thou her to live.'

So while I lay entranced a curtain
 seemed
 To shrivel with crackling from
 before my face:

Across mine eyes a waxing radiance
 beamed
 And showed a certain place.

I saw a vision of a woman, where
 Night and new morning strive for
 domination;
 Incomparably pale, and almost fair,
 And sad beyond expression.

Her eyes were like some fire-
 enshrining gem,
 Were stately like the stars, and
 yet were tender;
 Her figure charmed me like a windy
 stem
 Quivering and drooped and
 slender.

I stood upon the outer barren ground,
 She stood on inner ground that
 budded flowers;
 While circling in their never-slacken-
 ing round
 Danced by the mystic hours.

But every flower was lifted on a thorn,
 And every thorn shot upright from
 its sands
 To gall her feet; hoarse laughter
 pealed in scorn
 With cruel clapping hands.

She bled and wept, yet did not
 shrink; her strength
 Was strung up until daybreak of
 delight:
 She measured measureless sorrow
 toward its length,
 And breadth, and depth, and
 height.

Then marked I how a chain sustained
 her form,

A chain of living links not made
nor riven :

It stretched sheer up through light-
ning, wind, and storm,
And anchored fast in heaven.

One cried : 'How long ? yet founded
on the Rock

She shall do battle, suffer, and
attain.'—

One answered : 'Faith quakes in
the tempest shock—
Strengthen her soul again.'

I saw a cup sent down and come to
her

Brimfull of loathing and of bitter-
ness :

She drank with livid lips that seemed
to stir
The depth, not make it less.

But as she drank I spied a hand distil
New wine and virgin honey ;
making it

First bitter-sweet, then sweet indeed,
until
She tasted only sweet.

Her lips and cheeks waxed rosy-
fresh and young ;

Drinking she sang 'My soul shall
nothing want ;'

And drank anew : while soft a song
was sung,
A mystical slow chant.

One cried : 'The wounds are faith-
ful of a friend :

The wilderness shall blossom as
a rose.'—

One answered : 'Rend the veil,
declare the end,
Strengthen her ere she goes.'

Then earth and heaven were rolled
up like a scroll ;

Time and space, change and
death, had passed away ;

Weight, number, measure, each had
reached its whole :

The day had come, that day.

Multitudes—multitudes—stood up
in bliss,

Made equal to the angels, glorious,
fair ;

With harps, palms, wedding-gar-
ments, kiss of peace,
And crowned and haloed hair.

They sang a song, a new song in
the height,

Harping with harps to Him who
is strong and true :

They drank new wine, their eyes
saw with new light,
Lo all things were made new.

Tier beyond tier they rose and rose
and rose,

So high that it was dreadful,
flames with flames :

No man could number them, no
tongue disclose
Their secret sacred names.

As though one pulse stirred all, one
rush of blood

Fed all, one breath swept through
them myriad-voiced,

They struck their harps, cast down
their crowns, they stood
And worshipped and rejoiced.

Each face looked one way like a
moon new-lit,

Each face looked one way towards
its Sun of Love ;

Drank love and bathed in love and
mirrored it
And knew no end thereof.

Glory touched glory on each blessed
head,

Hands locked dear hands never
to sunder more :

These were the new-begotten from
the dead

Whom the great birthday bore.

Heart answered heart, soul answered
soul at rest,

Double against each other, filled,
sufficed :

All loving, loved of all ; but loving best
And best beloved of Christ.

I saw that one who lost her love in
pain,

Who trod on thorns, who drank
the loathsome cup ;

The lost in night, in day was found
again ;

The fallen was lifted up.

They stood together in the blessed
noon,

They sang together through the
length of days ;

Each loving face bent Sunwards like
a moon

New-lit with love and praise.

Therefore, O friend, I would not if
I might

Rebuild my house of lies, wherein
I joyed

One time to dwell : my soul shall
walk in white,

Cast down but not destroyed.

Therefore in patience I possess my
soul ;

Yea, therefore as a flint I set my
face,

To pluck down, to build up again
the whole—

But in a distant place.

These thorns are sharp, yet I can
tread on them ;

This cup is loathsome, yet He
makes it sweet :

My face is steadfast toward Jeru-
salem,

My heart remembers it.

I lift the hanging hands, the feeble
knees—

I, precious more than seven times
molten gold—

Until the day when from His
storehouses

God shall bring new and old ;

Beauty for ashes, oil of joy for grief,
Garment of praise for spirit of
heaviness :

Although to-day I fade as doth a leaf,
I languish and grow less.

Although to-day He prunes my twigs
with pain,

Yet doth His blood nourish and
warm my root :

To-morrow I shall put forth buds
again

And clothe myself with fruit.

Although to-day I walk in tedious
ways,

To-day His staff is turned into a
rod,

Yet will I wait for Him the appointed
days

And stay upon my God.

19 November 1858.

THE PRINCE'S PROGRESS

TILL all sweet gums and juices flow,
Till the blossom of blossoms blow,
The long hours go and come and go;

The bride she sleepeth, waketh,
sleepeth,

Waiting for one whose coming is
slow :—

Hark ! the bride weepeth.

‘How long shall I wait, come heat
come rime?’—

‘Till the strong Prince comes, who
must come in time’

(Her women say): ‘there’s a moun-
tain to climb,

A river to ford. Sleep, dream and
sleep ;

Sleep’ (they say): ‘we’ve muffled
the chime ;

Better dream than weep.’

In his world-end palace the strong
Prince sat,

Taking his ease on cushion and mat ;
Close at hand lay his staff and his hat.

‘When wilt thou start ? the bride
waits, O youth.’—

‘Now the moon’s at full ; I tarried
for that ;

Now I start in truth.

‘But tell me first, true voice of my
doom,

Of my veiled bride in her maiden
bloom ;

Keeps she watch through glare and
through gloom,

Watch for me asleep and
awake?’—

‘Spell-bound she watches in one
white room,

And is patient for thy sake.

‘By her head lilies and rosebuds
grow ;

The lilies droop, will the rosebuds
blow ?

The silver slim lilies hang the head
low ;

Their stream is scanty, their sun-
shine rare :

Let the sun blaze out, and let the
stream flow,

They will blossom and wax fair.

‘Red and white poppies grow at her
feet.

The blood-red wait for sweet summer
heat,

Wrapped in bud-coats, hairy and
neat ;

But the white buds swell, one day
they will burst,

Will open their death cups drowsy
and sweet :—

Which will open the first ?’

Then a hundred sad voices lifted a
wail,

And a hundred glad voices piped on
the gale :

‘Time is short, life is short,’ they
took up the tale :

‘Life is sweet, love is sweet, use
to-day while you may ;

Love is sweet, and to-morrow may
fail ;

Love is sweet, use to-day.’

While the song swept by, beseech-
ing and meek,

Up rose the Prince with a flush on
his cheek,

Up he rose to stir and to seek,

Going forth in the joy of his
strength :

Strong of limb if of purpose weak,
Starting at length.

Forth he set in the breezy morn,
Across green fields of nodding corn,
As goodly a Prince as ever was born,
Carolling with the carolling lark ;—
Sure his bride will be won and worn
Ere fall of the dark.

So light his step, so merry his smile,
A milkmaid loitered beside a stile,
Set down her pail and rested awhile,
A wave-haired milkmaid, rosy and
white ;
The Prince, who had journeyed at
least a mile,
Grew athirst at the sight.

‘Will you give me a morning
draught?’—

‘You’re kindly welcome,’ she said,
and laughed.

He lifted the pail, new milk he
quaffed ;

Then wiping his curly black beard
like silk :

‘Whitest cow that ever was calved
Surely gave you this milk.’

Was it milk now, or was it cream ?
Was she a maid, or an evil dream ?
Her eyes began to glitter and gleam ;
He would have gone, but he stayed
instead ;

Green they gleamed as he looked in
them :

‘Give me my fee,’ she said.—

‘I will give you a jewel of gold.’—

‘Not so ; gold is heavy and cold.’—

‘I will give you a velvet fold

Of foreign work your beauty to
deck.’—

‘Better I like my kerchief rolled
Light and white round my
neck.’—

‘Nay,’ cried he, ‘but fix your own
fee.’—

She laughed, ‘You may give the full
moon to me,

Or else sit under this apple-tree
Here for one idle day by my side ;

After that I’ll let you go free,
And the world is wide.’

Loth to stay, yet to leave her slack,
He half turned away, then he quite
turned back :

For courtesy’s sake he could not
lack

To redeem his own royal pledge ;
Ahead too the windy heaven lowered
black

With a fire-cloven edge.

So he stretched his length in the
apple-tree shade,

Lay and laughed and talked to the
maid,

Who twisted her hair in a cunning
braid

And writhed it in shining serpent-
coils,

And held him a day and a night fast
laid

In her subtle toils.

At the death of night and the birth
of day,

When the owl left off his sober play,
And the bat hung himself out of the
way,

Woke the song of mavis and
merle,

And heaven put off its hodden grey
For mother-o’-pearl.

Peeped up daisies here and there,
 Here, there, and everywhere ;
 Rose a hopeful lark in the air,
 Spreading out towards the sun his
 breast ;
 While the moon set solemn and fair
 Away in the West.

‘Up, up, up,’ called the watchman
 lark,
 In his clear *réveillée* ; ‘Hearken, oh
 hark !
 Press to the high goal, fly to the mark.
 Up, O sluggard, new morn is born ;
 If still asleep when the night falls
 dark,
 Thou must wait a second morn.’

‘Up, up, up,’ sad glad voices swelled :
 ‘So the tree falls and lies as it’s felled.
 Be thy bantls loosed, O sleeper, long
 held
 In sweet sleep whose end is not
 sweet.
 Be the slackness girt and the softness
 quelled
 And the slowness fleet.’

Off he set. The grass grew rare,
 A blight lurked in the darkening air,
 The very moss grew hueless and
 spare,
 The last daisy stood all astunt ;
 Behind his back the soil lay bare,
 But barer in front.

A land of chasm and rent, a land
 Of rugged blackness on either hand :
 If water trickled its track was tanned
 With an edge of rust to the chink ;
 If one stamped on stone or on sand
 It returned a clink.

A lifeless land, a loveless land,
 Without lair or nest on either hand :

Only scorpions jerked in the sand,
 Black as black iron, or dusty pale ;
 From point to point sheer rock was
 manned
 By scorpions in mail.

A land of neither life nor death,
 Where no man buildeth or fashioneth,
 Where none draws living or dying
 breath ;
 No man cometh or goeth there,
 No man doeth, seeketh, saith,
 In the stagnant air.

Some old volcanic upset must
 Have rent the crust and blackened
 the crust,
 Wrenched and ribbed it beneath its
 dust,
 Above earth’s molten centre at
 seethe,
 Heaved and heaped it by huge up-
 thrust
 Of fire beneath.

Untrodden before, untrodden since :
 Tedious land for a social Prince ;
 Halting, he scanned the outs and ins,
 Endless, labyrinthine, grim,
 Of the solitude that made him wince,
 Laying wait for him.

By bulging rock and gaping cleft,
 Even of half mere daylight reft,
 Rueful he peered to right and left,
 Muttering in his altered mood :
 ‘The fate is hard that weaves my
 weft,
 Though my lot be good.’

Dim the changes of day to night,
 Of night scarce dark to day not
 bright.

Still his road wound towards the
right,

Still he went, and still he went,
Till one night he spied a light,
In his discontent.

Out it flashed from a yawn-mouthed
cave,

Like a red-hot eye from a grave.
No man stood there of whom to
crave

Rest for wayfarer plodding by :
Though the tenant were churl or
knave
The Prince might try.

In he passed and tarried not,
Groping his way from spot to spot,
Towards where the cavern flare
glowed hot :

An old, old mortal, cramped and
double,
Was peering into a seething-pot,
In a world of trouble.

The veriest atomy he looked,
With grimy fingers clutching and
crooked,

Tight skin, a nose all bony and
hooked,

And a shaking, sharp, suspicious
way ;

Blinking, his eyes had scarcely
brook'd

The light of day.

Stared the Prince, for the sight was
new ;

Stared, but asked without more ado ;
'May a weary traveller lodge with
you,

Old father, here in your lair ?
In your country the inns seem few,
And scanty the fare.'

The head turned not to hear him
speak ;

The old voice whistled as through a
leak

(Out it came in a quavering squeak):

'Work for wage is a bargain fit :
If there's aught of mine that you seek
You must work for it.

'Buried alive from light and air
This year is the hundredth year,
I feed my fire with a sleepless care,
Watching my potion wane or wax :
Elixir of Life is simmering there,
And but one thing lacks.

'If you're fain to lodge here with me,
Take that pair of bellows you see—
Too heavy for my old hands they
be—

Take the bellows and puff and
puff :
When the steam curls rosy and free
The broth's boiled enough.

'Then take your choice of all I
have ;

I will give you life if you crave.

Already I'm mildewed for the grave,
So first myself I must drink my
fill :

But all the rest may be yours, to
save

Whomever you will.'

'Done,' quoth the Prince, and the
bargain stood.

First he piled on resinous wood,
Next plied the bellows in hopeful
mood ;

Thinking, 'My love and I will
live.

If I tarry, why life is good,
And she may forgive.'

The pot began to bubble and boil ;
 The old man cast in essence and oil,
 He stirred all up with a triple coil
 Of gold and silver and iron wire,
 Dredged in a pinch of virgin soil,
 And fed the fire.

But still the steam curled watery
 white ;
 Night turned to day and day to night ;
 One thing lacked, by his feeble sight
 Unseen, unguessed by his feeble
 mind :
 Life might miss him, but Death the
 blight
 Was sure to find.

So when the hundredth year was full
 The thread was cut and finished the
 school.
 Death snapped the old worn-out tool,
 Snapped him short while he stood
 and stirred
 (Though stiff he stood as a stiff-
 necked mule)
 With never a word.

Thus at length the old crab was
 nipped.
 The dead hand slipped, the dead
 finger dipped
 In the broth as the dead man
 slipped :—
 That same instant, a rosy red
 Flushed the steam, and quivered and
 clipped
 Round the dead old head.

The last ingredient was supplied
 (Unless the dead man mistook or
 lied).

Up started the Prince, he cast aside
 The bellows plied through the
 tedious trial,

Made sure that his host had died,
 And filled a phial.

‘One night’s rest,’ thought the
 Prince : ‘This done,
 Forth I speed with the rising sun :
 With the morrow I rise and run,
 Come what will of wind or of
 weather.

This draught of life, when my bride
 is won,
 We’ll drink together.’

Thus the dead man stayed in his
 grave,
 Self-chosen, the dead man in his
 cave ;

There he stayed, were he fool or
 knave,
 Or honest seeker who had not
 found :

While the Prince outside was prompt
 to crave
 Sleep on the ground.

‘If she watches, go bid her sleep ;
 Bid her sleep, for the road is steep :
 He can sleep who holdeth her cheap,
 Sleep and wake and sleep again.
 Let him sow, one day he shall reap,
 Let him sow the grain.

‘When there blows a sweet garden
 rose,
 Let it bloom and wither if no man
 knows :

But if one knows when the sweet
 thing blows,
 Knows, and lets it open and drop,
 If but a nettle his garden grows
 He hath earned the crop.’

Through his sleep the summons
 rang,
 Into his ears it sobbed and it sang.

Slow he woke with a drowsy pang,
 Shook himself without much
 debate,
 Turned where he saw green branches
 hang,
 Started though late.

For the black land was travelled o'er.
 He should see the grim land no more.
 A flowering country stretched before
 His face when the lovely day
 came back :
 He hugged the phial of Life he bore,
 And resumed his track.

By willow courses he took his path,
 Spied what a nest the kingfisher
 hath,
 Marked the fields green to after-
 math,
 Marked where the red-brown
 field-mouse ran,
 Loitered a while for a deep stream
 bath,
 Yawned for a fellow-man.

Up on the hills not a soul in view,
 In the vale not many nor few ;
 Leaves, still leaves and nothing new.
 It's oh for a second maiden, at
 least,
 To bear the flagon, and taste it too,
 And flavour the feast.

Lagging he moved, and apt to
 swerve ;
 Lazy of limb, but quick of nerve.
 At length the water-bed took a curve,
 The deep river swept its bankside
 bare ;
 Waters streamed from the hill-
 reserve—
 Waters here, waters there.

High above and deep below,
 Bursting, bubbling, swelling the flow,
 Like hill torrents after the snow,—
 Bubbling, gurgling, in whirling
 strife,
 Swaying, sweeping to and fro,—
 He must swim for his life.

Which way?—which way?—his
 eyes grew dim
 With the dizzying whirl—which way
 to swim ?
 The thunderous downshoot deafened
 him ;
 Half he choked in the lashing
 spray :
 Life is sweet, and the grave is
 grim—
 Which way?—which way?

A flash of light, a shout from the
 strand :
 'This way—this way ; here lies the
 land !'
 His phial clutched in one drowning
 hand ;
 He catches—misses—catches a
 rope ;
 His feet slip on the slipping sand :
 Is there life?—is there hope?

Just saved, without pulse or breath—
 Scarcely saved from the gulp of
 death ;
 Laid where a willow shadoweth—
 Laid where a swelling turf is
 smooth.
 (O Bride ! but the Bridegroom
 lingereth
 For all thy sweet youth.)

Kind hands do and undo,
 Kind voices whisper and coo :

'I will chafe his hands'—'And I'
 —'And you
 Raise his head, put his hair aside.'
 (If many laugh, one well may rue :
 Sleep on, thou Bride.)

So the Prince was tended with care :
 One wrung foul ooze from his
 clustered hair ;
 Two chafed his hands, and did not
 spare ;
 But one propped his head that
 drooped awry :
 Till his eyes oped, and at unaware
 They met eye to eye.

Oh a moon face in a shadowy place,
 And a light touch and a winsome
 grace,
 And a thrilling tender voice which
 says :
 'Safe from waters that seek the
 sea—
 Cold waters by rugged ways—
 Safe with me.'

While overhead bird whistles to bird,
 And round about plays a gamesome
 herd :
 'Safe with us'—some take up the
 word—
 'Safe with us, dear lord and
 friend :
 All the sweeter if long deferred
 Is rest in the end.'

Had he stayed to weigh and to scan,
 He had been more or less than a
 man :
 He did what a young man can,
 Spoke of toil and an arduous
 way—
 Toil to-morrow, while golden ran
 The sands of to-day.

Slip past, slip fast,
 Uncounted hours from first to last,
 Many hours till the last is past,
 Many hours dwindling to one—
 One hour whose die is cast,
 One last hour gone.

Come, gone—gone for ever—
 Gone as an unreturning river—
 Gone as to death the merriest liver—
 Gone as the year at the dying
 fall—
 To - morrow, to - day, yesterday,
 never—
 Gone once for all.

Came at length the starting-day,
 With last words, and last last words
 to say,
 With bodiless cries from far away—
 Chiding wailing voices that rang
 Like a trumpet-call to the tug and
 fray ;
 And thus they sang :

'Is there life?—the lamp burns
 low ;
 Is there hope?—the coming is
 slow :
 The promise promised so long ago,
 The long promise, has not been
 kept.
 Does she live?—does she die?—she
 slumbers so
 Who so oft has wept.

'Does she live!—does she die?—she
 languisheth
 As a lily drooping to death,
 As a drought-worn bird with failing
 breath,
 As a lovely vine without a stay,
 As a tree whereof the owner saith,
 "Hew it down to-day."'

Stung by that word, the Prince was
fain

To start on his tedious road again.
He crossed the stream where a ford
was plain,

He clomb the opposite bank
though steep,
And swore to himself to strain and
attain
Ere he tasted sleep.

Huge before him a mountain frowned
With foot of rock on the valley
ground,

And head with snows incessant
crowned,
And a cloud mantle about its
strength,
And a path which the wild goat hath
not found
In its breadth and length.

But he was strong to do and dare :
If a host had withstood him there,
He had braved a host with little care
In his lusty youth and his pride,
Tough to grapple though weak to
snare.
He comes, O Bride.

Up he went where the goat scarce
clings,
Up where the eagle folds her wings,
Past the green line of living things,
Where the sun cannot warm the
cold,—

Up he went as a flame enrings
Where there seems no hold.

Up a fissure barren and black,
Till the eagles tired upon his track,
And the clouds were left behind his
back,

Up till the utmost peak was past :

R

Then he gasped for breath and his
strength fell slack—
He paused at last.

Before his face a valley spread
Where fatness laughed, wine, oil, and
bread,

Where all fruit-trees their sweetness
shed,

Where all birds made love to their
kind,

Where jewels twinkled, and gold lay
red

And not hard to find.

Midway down the mountain side
(On its green slope the path was
wide)

Stood a house for a royal bride,
Built all of changing opal stone,
The royal palace, till now descried
In his dreams alone.

Less bold than in days of yore,
Doubting now though never before,
Doubting he goes and lags the more :
Is the time late? does the day
grow dim?

Rose, will she open the crimson core
Of her heart to him?

Above his head a tangle glows
Of wine-red roses, blushes, snows,
Closed buds and buds that uncloze,
Leaves, and moss, and prickles
too ;

His hand shook as he plucked a rose,
And the rose dropped dew.

Take heart of grace ! the potion of
Life

May go far to woo him a wife :

If she frown, yet a lover's strife

Lightly raised can be laid again :

D

A hasty word is never the knife
To cut love in twain.

Far away stretched the royal land,
Fed by dew, by a spice-wind fanned.
Light labour more, and his foot
would stand

On the threshold, all labour done ;
Easy pleasure laid at his hand,
And the dear Bride won.

His slackening steps pause at the
gate—

Does she wake or sleep?—the time
is late—

Does she sleep now, or watch and
wait ?

She has watched, she has waited
long,

Watching athwart the golden grate
With a patient song.

Fling the golden portals wide,
The Bridegroom comes to his
promised Bride :

Draw the gold-stiff curtains aside,
Let them look on each other's
face,

She in her meekness, he in his
pride—

Day wears apace.

Day is over, the day that wore.
What is this that comes through the
door,

The face covered, the feet before ?

This that coming takes his breath ;
This Bride not seen, to be seen no
more

Save of Bridegroom Death ?

Veiled figures carrying her
Sweep by yet make no stir ;
There is a smell of spice and myrrh,

A bride-chant burdened with one
name ;

The bride-song rises steadier
Than the torches' flame :—

'Too late for love, too late for joy,
Too late, too late !

You loitered on the road too long,
You trifled at the gate :
The enchanted dove upon her branch
Died without a mate ;
The enchanted princess in her tower
Slept, died, behind the grate ;
Her heart was starving all this while
You made it wait.

'Ten years ago, five years ago,
One year ago,
Even then you had arrived in time,
Though somewhat slow ;
Then you had known her living face
Which now you cannot know :
The frozen fountain would have
leaped,
The buds gone on to blow,
The warm south wind would have
awaked
To melt the snow.

'Is she fair now as she lies ?
Once she was fair ;
Meet queen for any kingly king,
With gold-dust on her hair.
Now these are poppies in her locks,
White poppies she must wear ;
Must wear a veil to shroud her face
And the want graven there :
Or is the hunger fed at length,
Cast off the care ?

'We never saw her with a smile
Or with a frown ;
Her bed seemed never soft to her,
Though tossed of down ;

She little heeded what she wore,
 Kirtle, or wreath, or gown ;
 We think her white brows often
 ached
 Beneath her crown,
 Till silvery hairs showed in her locks
 That used to be so brown.

'We never heard her speak in haste ;
 Her tones were sweet,
 And modulated just so much
 As it was meet :
 Her heart sat silent through the noise
 And concourse of the street.
 There was no hurry in her hands,
 No hurry in her feet ;
 There was no bliss drew nigh to her,
 That she might run to greet.

'You should have wept her yesterday,
 Wasting upon her bed :
 But wherefore should you weep to-day
 That she is dead ?
 Lo we who love weep not to-day,
 But crown her royal head.
 Let be these poppies that we strew,
 Your roses are too red :
 Let be these poppies, not for you
 Cut down and spread.'

11 October 1861 to March 1865.

A ROYAL PRINCESS

I a Princess king-descended, deckt
 with jewels, gilded, drest,
 Would rather be a peasant with her
 baby at her breast,
 For all I shine so like the sun, and
 am purple like the west.

Two and two my guards behind, two
 and two before,
 Two and two on either hand, they
 guard me evermore ;

Me, poor dove that must not coo—
 eagle that must not soar.

All my fountains cast up perfumes,
 all my gardens grow
 Scented woods and foreign spices,
 with all flowers in blow
 That are costly, out of season as the
 seasons go.

All my walls are lost in mirrors,
 whereupon I trace
 Self to right hand, self to left hand,
 self in every place,
 Self-same solitary figure, self-same
 seeking face.

Then I have an ivory chair high to
 sit upon,
 Almost like my father's chair which
 is an ivory throne ;
 There I sit uplift and upright, there
 I sit alone.

Alone by day, alone by night, alone
 days without end ;
 My father and my mother give me
 treasures, search and spend—
 O my father ! O my mother ! have
 you ne'er a friend ?

As I am a lofty princess, so my
 father is
 A lofty king, accomplished in all
 kingly subtilties,
 Holding in his strong right hand
 world-kingdoms' balances.

He has quarrelled with his neigh-
 bours, he has scourged his foes ;
 Vassal counts and princes follow
 where his pennon goes,
 Long-descended valiant lords whom
 the vulture knows,

On whose track the vulture swoops,
 when they ride in state
 To break the strength of armies and
 topple down the great :
 Each of these my courteous servant,
 none of these my mate.

My father counting up his strength
 sets down with equal pen
 So many head of cattle, head of
 horses, head of men ;
 These for slaughter, these for labour,
 with the how and when.

Some to work on roads, canals ; some
 to man his ships ;
 Some to smart in mines beneath
 sharp overseers' whips ;
 Some to trap fur-beasts in lands
 where utmost winter nips.

Once it came into my heart, and
 whelmed me like a flood,
 That these too are men and women,
 human flesh and blood ;
 Men with hearts and men with souls,
 though trodden down like mud.

Our feasting was not glad that night,
 our music was not gay :
 On my mother's graceful head I
 marked a thread of grey,
 My father frowning at the fare
 seemed every dish to weigh.

I sat beside them sole princess in my
 exalted place,
 My ladies and my gentlemen stood
 by me on the dais :
 A mirror showed me I look old and
 haggard in the face ;

It showed me that my ladies all are
 fair to gaze upon,

Plump, plenteous-haired, to every
 one love's secret lore is known,
 They laugh by day, they sleep by
 night ; ah me, what is a throne ?

The singing men and women sang
 that night as usual,
 The dancers danced in pairs and sets,
 but music had a fall,
 A melancholy windy fall as at a
 funeral.

Amid the toss of torches to my
 chamber back we swept ;
 My ladies loosed my golden chain ;
 meantime I could have wept
 To think of some in galling chains
 whether they waked or slept.

I took my bath of scented milk,
 delicately waited on :
 They burned sweet things for my
 delight, cedar and cinnamon,
 They lit my shaded silver lamp, and
 left me there alone.

A day went by, a week went by. One
 day I heard it said :
 ' Men are clamouring, women,
 children, clamouring to be fed ;
 Men like famished dogs are howling
 in the streets for bread.'

So two whispered by my door, not
 thinking I could hear,
 Vulgar naked truth, ungarnished for
 a royal ear ;
 Fit for cooping in the background,
 not to stalk so near.

But I strained my utmost sense to
 catch this truth, and mark :
 ' There are families out grazing, like
 cattle in the park.'

'A pair of peasants must be saved,
even if we build an ark.'

A merry jest, a merry laugh : each
strolled upon his way ;
One was my page, a lad I reared and
bore with day by day ;
One was my youngest maid, as sweet
and white as cream in May.

Other footsteps followed softly with
a weightier tramp ;
Voices said : 'Picked soldiers have
been summoned from the camp,
To quell these base-born ruffians who
make free to howl and stamp.'

'Howl and stamp?' one answered :
'They made free to hurl a stone
At the minister's state coach, well
aimed and stoutly thrown.'
'There's work then for the soldiers, for
this rank crop must be mown.'

'One I saw, a poor old fool with
ashes on his head,
Whimpering because a girl had
snatched his crust of bread :
Then he dropped ; when some one
raised him, it turned out he was
dead.'

'After us the deluge,' was retorted
with a laugh :
'If bread's the staff of life they must
walk without a staff.'
'While I've a loaf they're welcome
to my blessing and the chaff.'

These passed. 'The king' : stand
up. Said my father with a
smile :

'Daughter mine, your mother comes
to sit with you awhile ;

She's sad to-day, and who but you
her sadness can beguile ?'

He too left me. Shall I touch my
harp now while I wait,—
(I hear them doubling guard below
before our palace gate)—
Or shall I work the last gold stitch
into my veil of state ;

Or shall my woman stand and read
some unimpassioned scene,—
There's music of a lulling sort in
words that pause between ;
Or shall she merely fan me while I
wait here for the queen ?

Again I caught my father's voice in
sharp word of command :
'Charge' a clash of steel : 'Charge
again, the rebels stand.
Smite and spare not, hand to hand ;
smite and spare not, hand to
hand.'

There swelled a tumult at the gate,
high voices waxing higher ;
A flash of red reflected light lit the
cathedral spire ;
I heard a cry for faggots, then I
heard a yell for fire.

'Sit and roast there with your meat,
sit and bake there with your
bread,
You who sat to see us starve,' one
shrieking woman said :
'Sit on your throne and roast with
your crown upon your head.'

Nay, this thing will I do, while my
mother tarrieth,
I will take my fine spun gold, but
not to sew therewith,

I will take my gold and gems, and
rainbow fan and wreath ;

With a ransom in my lap, a king's
ransom in my hand,
I will go down to this people, will
stand face to face, will stand
Where they curse king, queen, and
princess of this cursed land.

They shall take all to buy them
bread, take all I have to give ;
I, if I perish, perish ; they to-day
shall eat and live ;
I, if I perish, perish—that's the
goal I half conceive :

Once to speak before the world, rend
bare my heart, and show
The lesson I have learned, which is
death, is life, to know.
I, if I perish, perish : in the name
of God I go.

22 October 1861.

MAIDEN-SONG

LONG ago and long ago
And long ago still,
There dwelt three merry maidens
Upon a distant hill.
One was tall Meggan,
And one was dainty May,
But one was fair Margaret,
More fair than I can say,
Long ago and long ago.

When Meggan pluckt the thorny
rose,
And when May pulled the brier,
Half the birds would swoop to see,
Half the beasts drew nigher,

Half the fishes of the streams
Would dart up to admire.
But, when Margaret pluckt a flag-
flower
Or poppy hot aflame,
All the beasts and all the birds
And all the fishes came
To her hand more soft than snow.

Strawberry leaves and May-dew
In brisk morning air,
Strawberry leaves and May-dew
Make maidens fair.
'I go for strawberry leaves,'
Meggan said one day :
'Fair Margaret can bide at home,
But you come with me, May :
Up the hill and down the hill,
Along the winding way
You and I are used to go.'

So these two fair sisters
Went with innocent will
Up the hill and down again,
And round the homestead hill :
While the fairest sat at home,
Margaret like a queen,
Like a blush-rose, like the moon
In her heavenly sheen,
Fragrant-breathed as milky cow
Or field of blossoming bean,
Graceful as an ivy bough
Born to cling and lean ;
Thus she sat to sing and sew.

When she raised her lustrous eyes
A beast peeped at the door ;
When she downward cast her eyes
A fish gasped on the floor ;
When she turned away her eyes
A bird perched on the sill,
Warbling out its heart of love,
Warbling warbling still,
With pathetic pleadings low.

Light-foot May with Meggan
Sought the choicest spot,
Clothed with thyme-alternate grass :
Then, while day waxed hot,
Sat at ease to play and rest,
A gracious rest and play ;
The loveliest maidens near or far,
When Margaret was away,
Who sat at home to sing and sew.

Sun-glow flushed their comely cheeks,
Wind-play tossed their hair,
Creeping things among the grass
Stroked them here and there ;
Meggan piped a merry note,
A fitful wayward lay
While shrill as bird on topmost
twig
Piped merry May ;
Honey-smooth the double flow.

Sped a herdsman from the vale,
Mounting like a flame ;
All on fire to hear and see,
With floating locks he came.
Looked neither north nor south,
Neither east nor west,
But sat him down at Meggan's feet
As love-bird on his nest,
And wooed her with a silent awe,
With trouble not expressed ;
She sang the tears into his eyes,
The heart out of his breast :
So he loved her, listening so.

She sang the heart out of his
breast,
The words out of his tongue ;
Hand and foot and pulse he paused
Till her song was sung.
Then he spoke up from his place
Simple words and true :
' Scanty goods have I to give,
Scanty skill to woo ;

But I have a will to work,
And a heart for you :
Bid me stay or bid me go.'

Then Meggan mused within herself :
' Better be first with him
Than dwell where fairer Margaret
sits,
Who shines my brightness dim,
For ever second where she sits,
However fair I be :
I will be lady of his love,
And he shall worship me ;
I will be lady of his herds
And stoop to his degree, '
At home where kids and fatlings
grow.'

Sped a shepherd from the height
Headlong down to look,
(White lambs followed, lured by love
Of their shepherd's crook) :
He turned neither east nor west,
Neither north nor south,
But knelt right down to May, for love
Of her sweet-singing mouth ;
Forgot his flocks, his panting flocks
In parching hill-side drouth ;
Forgot himself for weal or woe.

Trilled her song and swelled her
song
With maiden coy caprice
In a labyrinth of throbs,
Pauses, cadences ;
Clear-noted as a dropping brook,
Soft-noted like the bees,
Wild-noted as the shivering wind
Forlorn through forest-trees :
Love-noted like the wood-pigeon
Who hides herself for love,
Yet cannot keep her secret safe,
But coos and coos thereof :
Thus the notes rang loud or low.

He hung breathless on her breath ;
 Speechless, who listened well ;
 Could not speak or think or wish
 Till silence broke the spell.
 Then he spoke, and spread his
 hands,
 Pointing here and there :
 ' See my sheep and see the lambs,
 Twin lambs which they bare.
 All myself I offer you,
 All my flocks and care,
 Your sweet song hath moved me so.'

In her fluttered heart young May
 Mused a dubious while :
 ' If he loves me as he says '—
 Her lips curved with a smile :
 ' Where Margaret shines like the
 sun
 I shine but like a moon ;
 If sister Meggan makes her choice
 I can make mine as soon ;
 At cockcrow we were sister-maids,
 We may be brides at noon.'
 Said Meggan ' Yes ' ; May said not
 ' No.'

Fair Margaret stayed alone at home ;
 Awhile she sang her song,
 Awhile sat silent, then she thought
 ' My sisters loiter long.'
 That sultry noon had waned away,
 Shadows had waxen great :
 ' Surely,' she thought within herself,
 ' My sisters loiter late.'
 She rose, and peered out at the
 door,
 With patient heart to wait,
 And heard a distant nightingale
 Complaining of its mate ;
 Then down the garden slope she
 walked,
 Down to the garden gate,
 Leaned on the rail and waited so.

The slope was lightened by her eyes
 Like summer lightning fair,
 Like rising of the haloed moon
 Lightened her glimmering hair,
 While her face lightened like the sun
 Whose dawn is rosy white.
 Thus crowned with maiden majesty
 She peered into the night,
 Looked up the hill and down the hill,
 To left hand and to right,
 Flashing like fire-flies to and fro.

Waiting thus in weariness
 She marked the nightingale
 Telling, if any one would heed,
 Its old complaining tale.
 Then lifted she her voice and sang,
 Answering the bird :
 Then lifted she her voice and sang ;
 Such notes were never heard
 From any bird when Spring's in
 blow.

The king of all that country,
 Coursing far, coursing near,
 Curbed his amber-bitted steed,
 Coursed amain to hear ;
 All his princes in his train,
 Squire and knight and peer,
 With his crown upon his head,
 His sceptre in his hand,
 Down he fell at Margaret's knees
 Lord king of all that land,
 To her highness bending low.

Every beast and bird and fish
 Came mustering to the sound,
 Every man and every maid
 From miles of country round :
 Meggan on her herdsman's arm,
 With her shepherd May,
 Flocks and herds trooped at their
 heels
 Along the hill-side way ;

No foot too feeble for the ascent,
Not any head too grey ;
Some were swift and none were slow.

So Margaret sang her sisters home
In their marriage mirth ;
Sang free birds out of the sky,
Beasts along the earth,
Sang up fishes of the deep—
All breathing things that move—
Sang from far and sang from near
To her lovely love ;
Sang together friend and foe ;

Sang a golden-bearded king
Straightway to her feet,
Sang him silent where he knelt
In eager anguish sweet.
But when the clear voice died away,
When longest echoes died,
He stood up like a royal man
And claimed her for his bride.
So three maids were wooed and
won

In a brief May-tide,
Long ago and long ago.

6 July 1863.

‘THE INIQUITY OF THE
FATHERS UPON THE
CHILDREN’

OH the rose of keenest thorn !
One hidden summer morn
Under the rose I was born.

I do not guess his name
Who wrought my Mother’s shame,
And gave me life forlorn ;
But my Mother, Mother, Mother,
I know her from all other.
My Mother pale and mild,
Fair as ever was seen,

She was but scarce sixteen,
Little more than a child,
When I was born
To work her scorn.
With secret bitter throes,
In a passion of secret woes,
She bore me under the rose.

One who my Mother nursed
Took me from the first :—
‘O nurse, let me look upon
This babe that costs so dear ;
To-morrow she will be gone :
Other mothers may keep
Their babes awake and asleep,
But I must not keep her here.’—
Whether I know or guess,
I know this not the less.

So I was sent away
That none might spy the truth :
And my childhood waxed to youth
And I left off childish play.
I never cared to play
With the village boys and girls ;
And I think they thought me proud,
I found so little to say
And kept so from the crowd :
But I had the longest curls
And I had the largest eyes,
And my teeth were small like pearls.
The girls might flout and scout me,
But the boys would hang about me,
In sheepish mooning wise.

Our one-street village stood
A long mile from the town,
A mile of windy down
And bleak one-sided wood,
With not a single house.
Our town itself was small,
With just the common shops,
And throve in its small way.
Our neighbouring gentry reared

The good old-fashioned crops,
And made old-fashioned boasts
Of what John Bull would do
If Frenchman Frog appeared,
And drank old-fashioned toasts,
And made old-fashioned bows
To my Lady at the Hall.

My Lady at the Hall
Is grander than they all :
Hers is the oldest name
In all the neighbourhood ;
But the race must die with her
Though she's a lofty dame,
For she's unmarried still.
Poor people say she's good,
And has an open hand
As any in the land,
And she's the comforter
Of many sick and sad ;
My nurse once said to me
That everything she had
Came of my Lady's bounty :
' Though she's greatest in the county
She's humble to the poor,—
No beggar seeks her door
But finds help presently.
I pray both night and day
For her, and you must pray :
But she'll never feel distress
If needy folk can bless.'

I was a little maid
When here we came to live
From somewhere by the sea.
Men spoke a foreign tongue
There where we used to be
When I was merry and young,
Too young to feel afraid ;
The fisher folk would give
A kind strange word to me,
There by the foreign sea :
I don't know where it was,
But I remember still

Our cottage on a hill,
And fields of flowering grass
On that fair foreign shore.

I liked my old home best,
But this was pleasant too :
So here we made our nest
And here I grew.
And now and then my Lady
In riding past our door
Would nod to Nurse and speak,
Or stoop and pat my cheek ;
And I was always ready
To hold the field-gate wide
For my Lady to go through ;
My Lady in her veil
So seldom put aside,
My Lady grave and pale.

I often sat to wonder
Who might my parents be,
For I knew of something under
My simple-seeming state.
Nurse never talked to me
Of mother or of father,
But watched me early and late
With kind suspicious cares :
Or not suspicious, rather
Anxious, as if she knew
Some secret I might gather
And smart for unawares.
Thus I grew.

But Nurse waxed old and grey,
Bent and weak with years.
There came a certain day
That she lay upon her bed,
Shaking her palsied head,
With words she gasped to say
Which had to stay unsaid.
Then with a jerking hand
Held out so piteously
She gave a ring to me
Of gold wrought curiously,—

A ring which she had worn
 Since the day that I was born,
 She once had said to me.
 I slipped it on my finger ;
 Her eyes were keen to linger
 On my hand that slipped it on ;
 Then she sighed one rattling sigh
 And stared on with sightless eye :—
 The one who loved me was gone.

How long I stayed alone
 With the corpse I never knew,
 For I fainted dead as stone.
 When I came to life once more
 I was down upon the floor,
 With neighbours making ado
 To bring me back to life.
 I heard the sexton's wife
 Say : ' Up, my lad, and run
 To tell it at the Hall ;
 She was my Lady's nurse,
 And done can't be undone :
 I'll watch by this poor lamb.
 I guess my Lady's purse
 Is always open to such :
 I'd run up on my crutch
 A cripple as I am,'
 (For cramps had vexed her much)
 ' Rather than this dear heart
 Lack one to take her part.'

For days day after day
 On my weary bed I lay
 Wishing the time would pass ;
 Oh so wishing that I was
 Likely to pass away :
 For the one friend whom I knew
 Was dead, I knew no other,
 Neither father nor mother ;
 And I, what should I do ?

One day the sexton's wife
 Said : ' Rouse yourself, my dear :
 My Lady has driven down

From the Hall into the town,
 And we think she's coming here.
 Cheer up, for life is life.'

But I would not look or speak,
 Would not cheer up at all.
 My tears were like to fall ;
 So I turned round to the wall
 And hid my hollow cheek,
 Making as if I slept,
 As silent as a stone,
 And no one knew I wept.
 What was my Lady to me,
 The grand lady from the Hall ?
 She might come, or stay away,
 I was sick at heart that day :
 The whole world seemed to be
 Nothing, just nothing to me,
 For aught that I could see.

Yet I listened where I lay.
 A bustle came below,
 A clear voice said : ' I know :
 I will see her first alone,
 It may be less of a shock
 If she's so weak to-day.'—
 A light hand turned the lock,
 A light step crossed the floor,
 One sat beside my bed :
 But never a word she said.

For me, my shyness grew
 Each moment more and more :
 So I said never a word,
 And neither looked nor stirred ;
 I think she must have heard
 My heart go pit-a-pat :
 Thus I lay, my Lady sat,
 More than a mortal hour—
 (I counted one and two
 By the house-clock while I lay) :
 I seemed to have no power
 To think of a thing to say,

Or do what I ought to do,
Or rouse myself to a choice.

At last she said : ' Margaret,
Won't you even look at me ? '
A something in her voice
Forced my tears to fall at last,
Forced sobs from me thick and fast ;
Something not of the past,
Yet stirring memory ;
A something new, and yet
Not new, too sweet to last,
Which I never can forget.

I turned and stared at her :
Her cheek showed hollow-pale ;
Her hair like mine was fair,
A wonderful fall of hair
That screened her like a veil ;
But her height was statelier,
Her eyes had depth more deep :
I think they must have had
Always a something sad,
Unless they were asleep.

While I stared, my Lady took
My hand in her spare hand
Jewelled and soft and grand,
And looked with a long long look
Of hunger in my face ;
As if she tried to trace
Features she ought to know,
And half hoped, half feared, to find.
Whatever was in her mind,
She heaved a sigh at last,
And began to talk to me.

' Your nurse was my dear nurse,
And her nursling's dear,' said she :
' No one told me a word
Of her getting worse and worse,
Till her poor life was past '
(Here my Lady's tears dropped fast).
' I might have been with her,
I might have promised and heard,

But she had no comforter.
She might have told me much
Which now I shall never know,
Never never shall know.'
She sat by me sobbing so,
And seemed so woe-begone,
That I laid one hand upon
Hers with a timid touch,
Scarce thinking what I did,
Not knowing what to say :
That moment her face was hid
In the pillow close by mine,
Her arm was flung over me,
She hugged me, sobbing so
As if her heart would break,
And kissed me where I lay.

After this she often came
To bring me fruit or wine
Or sometimes hothouse flowers ;
And at nights I lay awake
Often and often thinking
What to do for her sake.
Wet or dry it was the same :
She would come in at all hours,
Set me eating and drinking
And say I must grow strong ;
At last the day seemed long,
And home seemed scarcely home,
If she did not come.

Well, I grew strong again :
In time of primroses,
I went to pluck them in the lane ;
In time of nestling birds,
I heard them chirping round the
house ;
And all the herds
Were out at grass when I grew strong,
And days were waxen long,
And there was work for bees
Among the May-bush boughs,
And I had shot up tall,
And life felt after all

Pleasant, and not so long,
When I grew strong.

I was going to the Hall
To be my Lady's maid :
'Her little friend,' she said to me,
'Almost her child,'
She said and smiled,
Sighing painfully ;
Blushing, with a second flush
As if she blushed to blush.

Friend, servant, child : just this
My standing at the Hall ;
The other servants call me 'Miss,'
My Lady calls me 'Margaret,'
With her clear voice musical.
She never chides when I forget
This or that ; she never chides.
Except when people come to stay
(And that's not often) at the Hall,
I sit with her all day
And ride out when she rides.
She sings to me and makes me sing ;
Sometimes I read to her,
Sometime we merely sit and talk.
She noticed once my ring
And made me tell its history ;
That evening in our garden walk
She said she should infer
The ring had been my father's first,
Then my mother's, given for me
To the nurse who nursed
My mother in her misery,
That so quite certainly
Some one might know me, who . . .
Then she was silent, and I too.

I hate when people come :
The women speak and stare
And mean to be so civil.
This one will stroke my hair,
That one will pat my cheek
And praise my Lady's kindness,
Expecting me to speak ;

I like the proud ones best
Who sit as struck with blindness,
As if I wasn't there.
But if any gentleman
Is staying at the Hall
(Though few come prying here),
My Lady seems to fear
Some downright dreadful evil,
And makes me keep my room
As closely as she can :
So I hate when people come,
It is so troublesome.
In spite of all her care,
Sometimes to keep alive
I sometimes do contrive
To get out in the grounds
For a whiff of wholesome air,
Under the rose you know :
It's charming to break bounds,
Stolen waters are sweet,
And what's the good of feet
If for days they mustn't go ?
Give me a longer tether,
Or I may break from it.

Now I have eyes and ears,
And just some little wit.
'Almost my Lady's child ;'
I recollect she smiled,
Sighed and blushed together.
Then her story of the ring
Sounds not improbable ;
She told it me so well
It seemed the actual thing.—
Oh keep your counsel close :
But I guess under the rose,
In long past summer weather
When the world was blossoming
And the rose upon its thorn—
I guess not who he was
Flawed honour like a glass,
And made my life forlorn ;
But my Mother, Mother, Mother,
Oh I know her from all other.

My Lady, you might trust
 Your daughter with your fame.
 Trust me, I would not shame
 Our honourable name,
 For I have noble blood
 Though I was bred in dust
 And brought up in the mud.
 I will not press my claim,
 Just leave me where you will :
 But you might trust your daughter,
 For blood is thicker than water
 And you're my mother still.

So my Lady holds her own
 With condescending grace,
 And fills her lofty place
 With an untroubled face
 As a queen may fill a throne.
 While I could hint a tale—
 (But then I am her child)—
 Would make her quail ;
 Would set her in the dust,
 Lorn with no comforter,
 Her glorious hair defiled
 And ashes on her cheek :
 The decent world would thrust
 Its finger out at her,
 Not much displeased I think
 To make a nine days' stir ;
 The decent world would sink
 Its voice to speak of her.

Now this is what I mean
 To do, no more, no less :
 Never to speak, or show
 Bare sign of what I know.
 Let the blot pass unseen ;
 Yea, let her never guess
 I hold the tangled clue
 She huddles out of view.
 Friend, servant, almost child—
 So be it and nothing more
 On this side of the grave.

Mother, in Paradise
 You'll see with clearer eyes ;
 Perhaps in this world even
 When you are like to die
 And face to face with Heaven
 You'll drop for once the lie :
 But you must drop the mask, not I.

My Lady promises
 Two hundred pounds with me
 Whenever I may wed
 A man she can approve :
 And since besides her bounty
 I'm fairest in the county
 (For so I've heard it said,
 Though I don't vouch for this),
 Her promised pounds may move
 Some honest man to see
 My virtues and my beauties ;
 Perhaps the rising grazier,
 Or temperance publican,
 May claim my wifely duties.
 Meanwhile I wait their leisure
 And grace-bestowing pleasure,
 I wait the happy man ;
 But if I hold my head
 And pitch my expectations
 Just higher than their level,
 They must fall back on patience.
 I may not mean to wed,
 Yet I'll be civil.

Now sometimes in a dream
 My heart goes out of me
 To build and scheme,
 Till I sob after things that seem
 So pleasant in a dream :
 A home such as I see
 My blessed neighbours live in
 With father and with mother,
 All proud of one another,
 Named by one common name
 From baby in the bud
 To full-blown workman Father ;

It's little short of Heaven.
 I'd give my gentle blood
 To wash my special shame
 And drown my private grudge.
 I'd toil and moil much rather,
 The dingiest cottage drudge
 Whose mother need not blush,
 Than live here like a lady
 And see my Mother flush
 And hear her voice unsteady
 Sometimes, yet never dare
 Ask to share her care.

Of course the servants sneer
 Behind my back at me ;
 Of course the village girls,
 Who envy me my curls
 And gowns and idleness,
 Take comfort in a jeer ;
 Of course the ladies guess
 Just so much of my history
 As points the emphatic stress
 With which they laud my Lady.
 The gentlemen who catch
 A casual glimpse of me
 And turn again to see,
 Their valets on the watch
 To speak a word with me,
 All know and sting me wild ;
 Till I am almost ready
 To wish that I were dead—
 No faces more to see,
 No more words to be said,
 My Mother safe at last
 Disburdened of her child,
 And the past past.

'All equal before God'—
 Our Rector has it so,
 And sundry sleepers nod.
 It may be so ; I know
 All are not equal here,
 And when the sleepers wake
 They make a difference.

'All equal in the grave'—
 That shows an obvious sense :
 Yet something which I crave
 Not death itself brings near ;
 How should death half atone
 For all my past, or make
 The name I bear my own ?

I love my dear old Nurse
 Who loved me without gains ;
 I love my mistress even,
 Friend, Mother, what you will.
 But I could almost curse
 My Father for his pains ;
 And sometimes at my prayer
 Kneeling in sight of Heaven
 I almost curse him still :
 Why did he set his snare
 To catch at unaware
 My Mother's foolish youth,—
 Load me with shame that's hers,
 And her with something worse,
 A lifelong lie for truth ?

I think my mind is fixed
 On one point and made up :
 To accept my lot unmixed ;
 Never to drug the cup
 But drink it by myself.
 I'll not be wooed for pelf ;
 I'll not blot out my shame
 With any man's good name ;
 But nameless as I stand,
 My hand is my own hand,
 And nameless as I came
 I go to the dark land.

'All equal in the grave'—
 I bide my time till then :
 'All equal before God'—
 To-day I feel His rod,
 To-morrow He may save.

Amen.

March 1865.

THE MONTHS:

A PAGEANT.

PERSONIFICATIONS.

*Boys.**Girls.*

JANUARY.

FEBRUARY.

MARCH.

APRIL.

JULY.

MAY.

AUGUST.

JUNE.

OCTOBER.

SEPTEMBER.

DECEMBER.

NOVEMBER.

ROBIN REDBREASTS; LAMBS AND SHEEP;
NIGHTINGALE AND NESTLINGS.

Various Flowers, Fruits, etc.

Scene: A COTTAGE WITH ITS GROUNDS.

[A room in a large comfortable cottage; a fire burning on the hearth; a table on which the breakfast things have been left standing. January discovered seated by the fire.]

JANUARY.

COLD the day and cold the drifted
snow,

Dim the day until the cold dark
night.

[Stirs the fire.

Crackle, sparkle, faggot; embers
glow:

Some one may be plodding through
the snow

Longing for a light,

For the light that you and I can show.

If no one else should come,

Here Robin Redbreast's welcome to
a crumb,

And never troublesome:

Robin, why don't you come and fetch
your crumb?

Here's butter for my hunch of bread,
And sugar for your crumb;

Here's room upon the hearthrug,
If you'll only come.

In your scarlet waistcoat,
With your keen bright eye,
Where are you loitering?
Wings were made to fly!

Make haste to breakfast,
Come and fetch your crumb,
For I'm as glad to see you
As you are glad to come.

[Two Robin Redbreasts are seen tapping with their beaks at the lattice, which January opens. The birds flutter in, hop about the floor, and peck up the crumbs and sugar thrown to them. They have scarcely finished their meal when a knock is heard at the door. January hangs a guard in front of the fire, and opens to February, who appears with a bunch of snowdrops in her hand.]

Good-morrow, sister.

FEBRUARY.

Brother, joy to you!

I've brought some snowdrops; only
just a few,

But quite enough to prove the world
awake,

Cheerful and hopeful in the frosty
dew

And for the pale sun's sake.

[She hands a few of her snowdrops to January, who retires into the background. While February stands arranging the remaining snowdrops in a glass of water on the window-sill, a soft butting and bleating are heard outside. She opens the door, and sees one foremost lamb, with other sheep and lambs bleating and crowding towards her.]

O you, you little wonder, come—
come in,

You wonderful, you woolly soft white
lamb:

You panting mother ewe, come too,
And lead that tottering twin
Safe in :
Bring all your bleating kith and kin,
Except the horny ram.

[February opens a second door in the back-ground, and the little flock files through into a warm and sheltered compartment out of sight.]

The lambkin tottering in its walk
With just a fleece to wear ;
The snowdrop drooping on its stalk
So slender,—
Snowdrop and lamb, a pretty pair,
Braving the cold for our delight,
Both white,
Both tender.

[A rattling of doors and windows ; branches seen without, tossing violently to and fro.]

How the doors rattle, and the branches
sway !
Here's brother March comes whirling
on his way
With winds that eddy and sing :—

[She turns the handle of the door, which bursts open, and discloses March hastening up, both hands full of violets and anemones.]

Come, show me what you bring ;
For I have said my say, fulfilled my
day,
And must away.

MARCH

[Stopping short on the threshold.]

I blow an arouse
Through the world's wide house
To quicken the torpid earth :
Grappling I fling
Each feeble thing,
But bring strong life to the birth.

R

I wrestle and frown,
And topple down ;
I wrench, I rend, I uproot ;
Yet the violet
Is born where I set
The sole of my flying foot,

[Hands violets and anemones to February, who retires into the background.]

And in my wake
Frail wind-flowers quake,
And the catkins promise fruit.
I drive ocean ashore
With rush and roar,
And he cannot say me nay :
My harpstrings all
Are the forests tall,
Making music when I play.
And as others perforce,
So I on my course
Run and needs must run,
With sap on the mount
And buds past count
And rivers and clouds and sun,
With seasons and breath
And time and death
And all that has yet begun.

[Before March has done speaking, a voice is heard approaching accompanied by a twittering of birds. April comes along singing, and stands outside and out of sight to finish her song.]

APRIL

[Outside.]

Pretty little three
Sparrows in a tree,
Light upon the wing ;
Though you cannot sing
You can chirp of Spring :
Chirp of Spring to me,
Sparrows, from your tree.

E

Never mind the showers,
Chirp about the flowers
While you build a nest :
Straws from east and west,
Feathers from your breast,
Make the snuggest bowers
In a world of flowers.

You must dart away
From the chosen spray,
You intrusive third
Extra little bird ;
Join the unwedded herd !
These have done with play,
And must work to-day.

[Appearing at the open door.]

Good-morrow and good-bye : if
others fly,
Of all the flying months you're the
most flying.

MARCH.

You're hope and sweetness, April.

APRIL.

Birth means dying,
As wings and wind mean flying ;
So you and I and all things fly or
die ;
And sometimes I sit sighing to think
of dying.
But meanwhile I've a rainbow in my
showers,
And a lapful of flowers,
And these dear nestlings aged three
hours ;
And here's their mother sitting ;
Their father's merely flitting
To find their breakfast somewhere
in my bowers,

[As she speaks April shows March her
apron full of flowers and nest full of
birds. March wanders away into the
grounds. April, without entering the
cottage, hangs over the hungry nestlings
watching them.]

What beaks you have, you funny
things,

What voices shrill and weak ;
Who'd think that anything that sings
Could sing through such a beak ?
Yet you'll be nightingales one day,
And charm the country side,
When I'm away and far away
And May is queen and bride.

[May arrives unperceived by April, and
gives her a kiss. April starts and looks
round.]

Ah May, good-morrow, May, and so
good-bye.

MAY.

That's just your way, sweet April,
smile and sigh :
Your sorrow's half in fun,
Begun and done
And turned to joy while twenty
seconds run.
I've gathered flowers all as I came
along,
At every step a flower
Fed by your last bright shower,—

[She divides an armful of all sorts of flowers
with April, who strolls away through the
garden.]

And gathering flowers I listened to
the song
Of every bird in bower.

The world and I are far too full
of bliss

To think or plan or toil or care ;
 The sun is waxing strong,
 The days are waxing long,
 And all that is
 Is fair.

Here are my buds of lily and of
 rose,
 And here's my namesake blossom
 may ;
 And from a watery spot
 See here forget-me-not,
 With all that blows
 To-day.

Hark to my linnets from the hedges
 green,
 Blackbird and lark and thrush
 and dove,
 And every nightingale
 And cuckoo tells its tale,
 And all they mean
 Is love.

[June appears at the further end of the
 garden, coming slowly towards May,
 who, seeing her, exclaims]

Surely you're come too early, sister
 June.

JUNE.

Indeed I feel as if I came too soon
 To round your young May moon
 And set the world a-gasping at my
 noon.

Yet come I must. So here are
 strawberries
 Sun-flushed and sweet, as many as
 you please ;
 And here are full-blown roses by the
 score,
 More roses, and yet more.

[May, eating strawberries, withdraws
 among the flower beds.]

The sun does all my long day's work
 for me,
 Raises and ripens everything ;
 I need but sit beneath a leafy tree
 And watch and sing.

[Seats herself in the shadow of a laburnum.]

Or if I'm lulled by note of bird and
 bee,
 Or lulled by noontide's silence
 deep,
 I need but nestle down beneath my
 tree
 And drop asleep.

[June falls asleep ; and is not awakened
 by the voice of July, who behind the
 scenes is heard half singing, half calling.]

JULY

[Behind the scenes.]

Blue flags, yellow flags, flags all
 freckled,
 Which will you take ? yellow, blue,
 speckled !
 Take which you will, speckled, blue,
 yellow,
 Each in its way has not a fellow.

[Enter July, a basket of many-coloured
 irises slung upon his shoulders, a bunch
 of ripe grass in one hand, and a plate
 piled full of peaches balanced upon the
 other. He steals up to June, and tickles
 her with the grass. She wakes.]

JUNE.

What, here already ?

JULY.

Nay, my tryst is kept ;
 The longest day slipped by you while
 you slept.
 I've brought you one curved pyramid
 of bloom,

[Hands her the plate.]

Not flowers but peaches, gathered
 where the bees,
 As downy, bask and boom
 In sunshine and in gloom of trees.
 But get you in, a storm is at my
 heels ;
 The whirlwind whistles and wheels,
 Lightning flashes and thunder peals,
 Flying and following hard upon my
 heels.

[June takes shelter in a thickly-woven
 arbour.]

The roar of a storm sweeps up
 From the east to the lurid west,
 The darkening sky, like a cup,
 Is filled with rain to the brink ;
 The sky is purple and fire,
 Blackness and noise and unrest ;
 The earth, parched with desire,
 Opens her mouth to drink.

Send forth thy thunder and fire,
 Turn over thy brimming cup,
 O sky, appease the desire
 Of earth in her parched unrest ;
 Pour out drink to her thirst,
 Her famishing life lift up ;
 Make thyself fair as at first,
 With a rainbow for thy crest.

Have done with thunder and fire,
 O sky with the rainbow crest ;
 O earth, have done with desire,
 Drink, and drink deep, and rest.

[Enter August, carrying a sheaf made up
 of different kinds of grain.]

Hail, brother August, flushed and
 warm
 And scatheless from my storm.
 Your hands are full of corn, I see,
 As full as hands can be :

And earth and air both smell as
 sweet as balm
 In their recovered calm,
 And that they owe to me.

[July retires into a shrubbery.]

AUGUST.

Wheat sways heavy, oats are airy,
 Barley bows a graceful head,
 Short and small shoots up canary,
 Each of these is some one's bread ;
 Bread for man or bread for beast,
 Or at very least
 A bird's savoury feast.

Men are brethren of each other,
 One in flesh and one in food ;
 And a sort of foster-brother
 Is the litter or the brood
 Of that folk in fur or feather
 Who, with men together,
 Breast the wind and weather.

[August describes September toiling across
 the lawn.]

My harvest home is ended ; and I spy
 September drawing nigh
 With the first thought of Autumn in
 her eye,
 And the first sigh
 Of Autumn wind among her locks
 that fly.

[September arrives, carrying upon her head
 a basket heaped high with fruit.]

SEPTEMBER.

Unload me, brother. I have brought
 a few
 Plums and these pears for you,
 A dozen kinds of apples, one or two
 Melons, some figs all bursting
 through

Their skins, and pearled with dew
These damsons violet-blue.

[While September is speaking, August lifts the basket to the ground, selects various fruits, and withdraws slowly along the gravel walk, eating a pear as he goes.]

My song is half a sigh
Because my green leaves die ;
Sweet are my fruits, but all my
leaves are dying ;
And well may Autumn sigh,
And well may I
Who watch the sere leaves flying.

My leaves that fade and fall,
I note you one and all ;
I call you, and the Autumn wind is
calling,
Lamenting for your fall,
And for the fall
You spread on earth in falling.

And here's a song of flowers to suit
such hours :
A song of the last lilies, the last
flowers,
Amid my withering bowers.

In the sunny garden bed
Lilies look so pale,
Lilies droop the head
In the shady grassy vale ;
If all alike they pine
In shade and in shine,
If everywhere they grieve,
Where will lilies live ?

[October enters briskly, some leafy twigs bearing different sorts of nuts in one hand, and a long ripe hop-bine trailing after him from the other. A dahlia is stuck in his buttonhole.]

OCTOBER.

Nay, cheer up sister. Life is not
quite over,
Even if the year has done with corn
and clover,
With flowers and leaves ; besides, in
fact it's true,
Some leaves remain and some flowers
too
For me and you.
Now see my crops :

[Offering his produce to September.]

I've brought you nuts and hops ;
And when the leaf drops, why, the
walnut drops.

[October wreathes the hop-bine about September's neck, and gives her the nut twigs. They enter the cottage together, but without shutting the door. She steps into the background : he advances to the hearth, removes the guard, stirs up the smouldering fire, and arranges several chestnuts ready to roast.]

Crack your first nut and light your
first fire,
Roast your first chestnut crisp on
the bar ;
Make the logs sparkle, stir the blaze
higher,
Logs are cheery as sun or as star,
Logs we can find wherever we are.

Spring one soft day will open the
leaves,
Spring one bright day will lure
back the flowers ;
Never fancy my whistling wind
grieves,
Never fancy I've tears in my
showers :
Dance, nights and days ! and
dance on, my hours !

[Sees November approaching.]

Here comes my youngest sister,
 looking dim
 And grim,
 With dismal ways.
 What cheer, November ?

NOVEMBER

[Entering and shutting the door.]

Nought have I to bring,
 Tramping a-chill and shivering,
 Except these pine-cones for a blaze,—
 Except a fog which follows,
 And stuffs up all the hollows,—
 Except a hoar frost here and there,—
 Except some shooting stars
 Which dart their luminous cars
 Trackless and noiseless through the
 keen night air.

[October, shrugging his shoulders, withdraws into the background, while November throws her pine-cones on the fire, and sits down listlessly.]

The earth lies fast asleep, grown
 tired

Of all that's high or deep ;
 There's nought desired and nought
 required

Save a sleep.

I rock the cradle of the earth,
 I lull her with a sigh ;
 And know that she will wake to mirth
 By and by.

[Through the window December is seen running and leaping in the direction of the door. He knocks.]

Ah, here's my youngest brother come
 at last :

[Calls out without rising.]

Come in, December.

[He opens the door and enters, loaded with evergreens in berry, etc.]

Come, and shut the door,
 For now it's snowing fast ;
 It snows, and will snow more and
 more ;
 Don't let it drift in on the floor.
 But you, you're all aglow ; how can
 you be
 Rosy and warm and smiling in the
 cold ?

DECEMBER.

Nay, no closed doors for me,
 But open doors and open hearts and
 glee
 To welcome young and old.

Dimmest and brightest month
 am I ;
 My short days end, my lengthening
 days begin ;
 What matters more or less sun in
 the sky,
 When all is sun within ?

[He begins making a wreath as he sings.]

Ivy and privet dark as night,
 I weave with hips and haws a cheer-
 ful show,
 And holly for a beauty and delight,
 And milky mistletoe.

While high above them all I set
 Yew twigs and Christmas roses pure
 and pale ;
 Then Spring her snowdrop and her
 violet
 May keep, so sweet and frail ;

May keep each merry singing bird,
 Of all her happy birds that singing
 build :

For I've a carol which some shep-
herds heard
Once in a wintry field.

[While December concludes his song all
the other Months troop in from the garden,
or advance out of the background. The
Twelve join hands in a circle, and begin
dancing round to a stately measure as
the Curtain falls.]

Summer 1879.

A BALLAD OF BODING

THERE are sleeping dreams and
waking dreams ;
What seems is not always as it seems.

I looked out of my window in the
sweet new morning,
And there I saw three barges of
manifold adorning
Went sailing toward the East :
The first had sails like fire,
The next like glittering wire,
But sackcloth were the sails of the
least ;
And all the crews made music, and
two had spread a feast.

The first choir breathed in flutes,
And fingered soft guitars ;
The second won from lutes
Harmonious chords and jars,
With drums for stormy bars :
But the third was all of harpers and
scarlet trumpeters ;
Notes of triumph, then
An alarm again,
As for onset, as for victory, rallies,
stirs,
Peace at last and glory to the van-
quishers.

The first barge showed for figure-
head a Love with wings ;
The second showed for figurehead a
Worm with stings ;
The third, a Lily tangled to a Rose
which clings.
The first bore for freight gold and
spice and down ;
The second bore a sword, a sceptre,
and a crown ;
The third, a heap of earth gone to
dust and brown.
Winged Love meseemed like Folly
in the face ;
Stinged Worm meseemed loathly in
his place ;
Lily and Rose were flowers of grace.

Merry went the revel of the fire-
sailed crew,
Singing, feasting, dancing to and fro :
Pleasures ever changing, ever grace-
ful, ever new ;
Sighs, but scarce of woe ;
All the sighing
Wooed such sweet replying ;
All the sighing, sweet and low,
Used to come and go
For more pleasure, merely so.
Yet at intervals some one grew
tired
Of everything desired,
And sank, I knew not whither, in
sorry plight,
Out of sight.

The second crew seemed ever
Wider-visioned, graver,
More distinct of purpose, more sus-
tained of will ;
With heads erect and proud,
And voices sometimes loud ;
With endless tacking, counter-tack-
ing,

All things grasping, all things
lacking,
It would seem ;
Ever shifting helm, or sail, or shroud,
Drifting on as in a dream.
Hoarding to their utmost bent,
Feasting to their fill,
Yet gnawed by discontent,
Envy, hatred, malice, on their road
they went.
Their freight was not a treasure,
Their music not a pleasure ;
The sword flashed, cleaving through
their bands,
Sceptre and crown changed hands.

The third crew as they went
Seemed mostly different ;
They toiled in rowing, for to them
the wind was contrary,
As all the world might see.
They laboured at the oar,
While on their heads they bore
The fiery stress of sunshine more
and more.
They laboured at the oar hand-
sore,
Till rain went splashing,
And spray went dashing,
Down on them, and up on them,
more and more.
Their sails were patched and rent,
Their masts were bent,
In peril of their lives they worked
and went.
For them no feast was spread,
No soft luxurious bed
Scented and white,
No crown or sceptre hung in sight ;
In weariness and painfulness,
In thirst and sore distress,
They rowed and steered from left
to right
With all their might.

Their trumpeters and harpers round
about
Incessantly played out,
And sometimes they made answer
with a shout ;
But oftener they groaned or wept,
And seldom paused to eat, and
seldom slept.
I wept for pity watching them, but
more
I wept heart-sore
Once and again to see
Some weary man plunge overboard,
and swim
To Love or Worm ship floating
buoyantly :
And there all welcomed him.

The ships steered each apart and
seemed to scorn each other,
Yet all the crews were inter-
changeable ;
Now one man, now another,—
Like bloodless spectres some, some
flushed by health,—
Changed openly, or changed by
stealth,
Scaling a slippery side, and scaled
it well.
The most left Love ship, hauling
wealth
Up Worm ship's side ;
While some few hollow-eyed
Left either for the sack-sailed boat ;
But this, though not remote,
Was worst to mount, and whoso left
it once
Scarce ever came again,
But seemed to loathe his erst
companions,
And wish and work them bane.

Then I knew (I know not how) there
lurked quicksands full of dread,

Rocks and reefs and whirlpools in
 the water bed,
 Whence a waterspout
 Instantaneously leaped out,
 Roaring as it reared its head.
 Soon I spied a something dim
 Many-handed, grim,
 That went flitting to and fro the first
 and second ship ;
 It puffed their sails full out
 With puffs of smoky breath
 From a smouldering lip,
 And cleared the waterspout
 Which reeled roaring round about
 Threatening death.
 With a horny hand it steered,
 And a horn appeared
 On its sneering head upreared
 Haughty and high
 Against the blackening lowering sky.
 With a hoof it swayed the waves ;
 They opened here and there,
 Till I spied deep open graves
 Full of skeletons
 That were men and women once
 Foul or fair ;
 Full of things that creep
 And fester in the deep
 And never breathe the clean life-
 nurturing air.

The third bark held aloof
 From the Monster with the hoof,
 Despite his urgent beck,
 And fraught with guile
 Abominable his smile ;
 Till I saw him take a flying leap on
 to that deck.
 Then full of awe,
 With these same eyes I saw
 His head incredible retract its horn
 Rounding like babe's new born,
 While silvery phosphorescence played
 About his dis-horned head.

The sneer smoothed from his lip,
 He beamed blandly on the ship ;
 All winds sank to a moan,
 All waves to a monotone
 (For all these seemed his realm),
 While he laid a strong caressing
 hand upon the helm.

Then a cry well nigh of despair
 Shrieked to heaven, a clamour of
 desperate prayer.
 The harpers harped no more,
 While the trumpeters sounded sore,
 An alarm to wake the dead from
 their bed :
 To the rescue, to the rescue, now
 or never,
 To the rescue, O ye living, O ye dead,
 Or no more help or hope for ever !—
 The planks strained as though they
 must part asunder,
 The masts bent as though they must
 dip under,
 And the winds and the waves at length
 Girt up their strength,
 And the depths were laid bare,
 And heaven flashed fire and volleyed
 thunder
 Through the rain-choked air,
 And sea and sky seemed to kiss
 In the horror and the hiss
 Of the whole world shuddering every-
 where.

Lo ! a Flyer swooping down
 With wings to span the globe,
 And splendour for his robe
 And splendour for his crown.
 He lighted on the helm with a foot
 of fire,
 And spun the Monster overboard :
 And that monstrous thing abhorred,
 Gnashing with balked desire,
 Wriggled like a worm infirm

Up the Worm
Of the loathly figurehead.
There he crouched and gnashed ;
And his head re-horned, and gashed
From the other's grapple, dripped
 bloody red.

I saw that thing accurst
Wreak his worst
On the first and second crew :
Some with baited hook
He angled for and took,
Some dragged overboard in a net
 he threw ;
Some he did to death
With hoof or horn or blasting breath.

I heard a voice of wailing
Where the ships went sailing,
A sorrowful voice prevailing
Above the sound of the sea,
Above the singers' voices,
And musical merry noises ;
All songs had turned to sighing,
The light was failing,
The day was dying—
Ah me

That such a sorrow should be !

There was sorrow on the sea and
 sorrow on the land
When Love ship went down by the
 bottomless quicksand
To its grave in the bitter wave.
There was sorrow on the sea and
 sorrow on the land
When Worm ship went to pieces on
 the rock-bound strand,
And the bitter wave was its grave.
But land and sea waxed hoary
In whiteness of a glory
Never told in story
Nor seen by mortal eye,
When the third ship crossed the bar
Where whirls and breakers are,

And steered into the splendours of
 the sky ;
That third bark and that least
Which had never seemed to feast,
Yet kept high festival above sun and
 moon and star.

Before 1882.

MONNA INNOMINATA

A SONNET OF SONNETS

BEATRICE, immortalized by 'altissimo poeta . . . cotanto amante' ; Laura, celebrated by a great though an inferior bard, —have alike paid the exceptional penalty of exceptional honour, and have come down to us resplendent with charms, but (at least, to my apprehension) scant of attractiveness.

These heroines of world-wide fame were preceded by a bevy of unnamed ladies, 'donne innominate,' sung by a school of less conspicuous poets ; and in that land and that period which gave simultaneous birth to Catholics, to Albigenses, and to Troubadours, one can imagine many a lady as sharing her lover's poetic aptitude, while the barrier between them might be one held sacred by both, yet not such as to render mutual love incompatible with mutual honour.

Had such a lady spoken for herself, the portrait left us might have appeared more tender, if less dignified, than any drawn even by a devoted friend. Or had the Great Poetess of our own day and nation only been unhappy instead of happy, her circumstances would have invited her to bequeath to us, in lieu of the 'Portuguese Sonnets,' an inimitable 'donna innominata' drawn not from fancy but from feeling, and worthy to occupy a niche beside Beatrice and Laura.

I

'Lo di che han detto a' dolci amici addio.'
DANTE.

'Amor, con quanto sforzo oggi mi vinci !'
PETRARCA.

COME back to me, who wait and
 watch for you :—

Or come not yet, for it is over then,
 And long it is before you come
 again,
 So far between my pleasures are and
 few.
 While, when you come not, what I
 do I do
 Thinking 'Now when he comes,'
 my sweetest 'when':
 For one man is my world of all
 the men
 This wide world holds; O love, my
 world is you.
 Howbeit, to meet you grows almost
 a pang
 Because the pang of parting
 comes so soon;
 My hope hangs waning, waxing,
 like a moon
 Between the heavenly days on
 which we meet:
 Ah me, but where are now the songs
 I sang
 When life was sweet because you
 called them sweet?

2

'Era già l'ora che volge il desio.'—DANTE.
 'Ricorro al tempo ch' io vi vidi prima.'
 PETRARCA.

I wish I could remember that first day,
 First hour, first moment of your
 meeting me,
 If bright or dim the season, it
 might be
 Summer or Winter for aught I can
 say;
 So unrecorded did it slip away,
 So blind was I to see and to fore-
 see,
 So dull to mark the budding of
 my tree
 That would not blossom yet for
 many a May.

If only I could recollect it, such
 A day of days! I let it come
 and go
 As traceless as a thaw of bygone
 snow;
 It seemed to mean so little, meant
 so much;
 If only now I could recall that touch,
 First touch of hand in hand—Did
 one but know!

3

'O ombre vane, fuor che ne l'aspetto!'
 DANTE.

'Immaginata guida la conduce.'
 PETRARCA.

I dream of you, to wake: would that
 I might
 Dream of you and not wake but
 slumber on;
 Nor find with dreams the dear
 companion gone,
 As, Summer ended, Summer birds
 take flight.
 In happy dreams I hold you full in
 sight,
 I blush again who waking look
 so wan;
 Brighter than sunniest day that
 ever shone,
 In happy dreams your smile makes
 day of night.
 Thus only in a dream we are at one,
 Thus only in a dream we give
 and take
 The faith that maketh rich who
 take or give;
 If thus to sleep is sweeter than to
 wake,
 To die were surely sweeter
 than to live,
 Though there be nothing new be-
 neath the sun.

4

'Poca favilla gran fiamma seconda.'

DANTE.

'Ogni altra cosa, ogni pensier va fore,
E sol ivi con voi rimansi amore.'

PETRARCA.

I loved you first: but afterwards
your love,

Outsoaring mine, sang such a
loftier song

As drowned the friendly cooings of
my dove.

Which owes the other most? My
love was long,

And yours one moment seemed to
wax more strong;

I loved and guessed at you, you
construed me

And loved me for what might or
might not be—

Nay, weights and measures do us
both a wrong.

For verily love knows not 'mine' or
'thine';

With separate 'I' and 'thou' free
love has done,

For one is both and both are
one in love:

Rich love knows nought of 'thine
that is not mine';

Both have the strength and both
the length thereof,

Both of us, of the love which
makes us one.

5

'Amor che a nullo amato amar perdona.'

DANTE.

'Amor m'addusse in sì gioiosa spene.'

PETRARCA.

O my heart's heart, and you who
are to me

More than myself myself, God be
with you,

Keep you in strong obedience leal
and true

To Him whose noble service setteth
free;

Give you all good we see or can
foresee,

Make your joys many and your
sorrows few,

Bless you in what you bear and
what you do,

Yea, perfect you as He would have
you be.

So much for you; but what for me,
dear friend?

To love you without stint and all
I can,

To-day, to-morrow, world without an
end;

To love you much and yet to love
you more,

As Jordan at his flood sweeps either
shore;

Since woman is the helpmeet
made for man.

6

'Or puoi la quantitate
Comprender de l'amor che a te mi scalda.'

DANTE.

'Non vo' che da tal nodo amor mi scioglia.'

PETRARCA.

Trust me, I have not earned your
dear rebuke,—

I love, as you would have me,
God the most;

Would lose not Him, but you,
must one be lost,

Nor with Lot's wife cast back a
faithless look,

Unready to forego what I forsook;
This say I, having counted up the
cost,

This, though I be the feeblest of
God's host,

The sorriest sheep Christ shepherds
with His crook.

Yet while I love my God the most,
I deem

That I can never love you over-
much ;

I love Him more, so let me love
you too ;

Yea, as I apprehend it, love is such
I cannot love you if I love not Him,
I cannot love Him if I love not
you.

7

'Qui primavera sempre ed ogni frutto.'
DANTE.

'Ragionando con meco ed io con lui.'
PETRARCA.

'Love me, for I love you'—and
answer me,

'Love me, for I love you': so
shall we stand

As happy equals in the flowering
land

Of love, that knows not a dividing
sea.

Love builds the house on rock and
not on sand,

Love laughs what while the winds
rave desperately ;

And who hath found love's citadel
unmanned ?

And who hath held in bonds love's
liberty ?—

My heart's a coward though my
words are brave—

We meet so seldom, yet we surely
part

So often ; there's a problem for
your art !

Still I find comfort in his Book
who saith,

Though jealousy be cruel as the
grave,

And death be strong, yet love
is strong as death.

8

'Come dicesse a Dio, D'altro non calme.'
DANTE.

'Spero trovar pietà non che perdono.'
PETRARCA.

'I, if I perish, perish'—Esther spake :
And bride of life or death she made
her fair

In all the lustre of her perfumed
hair

And smiles that kindle longing but
to slake.

She put on pomp of loveliness, to
take

Her husband through his eyes at
unaware ;

She spread abroad her beauty for
a snare,

Harmless as doves and subtle as a
snake.

She trapped him with one mesh of
silken hair,

She vanquished him by wisdom of
her wit,

And built her people's house
that it should stand :—

If I might take my life so in my
hand,

And for my love to Love put up my
prayer,

And for love's sake by Love be
granted it !

9

'O dignitosa coscienza e netta !'—DANTE.
'Spirto più acceso di virtuti ardenti.'

PETRARCA.

Thinking of you, and all that was,
and all

That might have been and now
can never be,

I feel your honoured excellence,
 and see
 Myself unworthy of the happier call :
 For woe is me who walk so apt to fall,
 So apt to shrink afraid, so apt to
 flee,
 Apt to lie down and die (ah woe
 is me !)
 Faithless and hopeless turning to the
 wall.
 And yet not hopeless quite nor faith-
 less quite,
 Because not loveless ; love may toil
 all night,
 But take at morning ; wrestle till
 the break
 Of day, but then wield power with
 God and man :—
 So take I heart of grace as best I
 can,
 Ready to spend and be spent for
 your sake.

10

' Con miglior corso e con migliore stella.'
 DANTE.

' La vita fugge e non s'arresta un' ora.'
 PETRARCA.

Time flies, hope flags, life plies a
 wearied wing ;
 Death following hard on life gains
 ground apace ;
 Faith runs with each and rears an
 eager face,
 Outruns the rest, makes light of
 everything,
 Spurns earth, and still finds breath
 to pray and sing ;
 While love ahead of all uplifts his
 praise,
 Still asks for grace and still gives
 thanks for grace,
 Content with all day brings and
 night will bring.

Life wanes ; and when love folds his
 wings above
 Tired hope, and less we feel his
 conscious pulse,
 Let us go fall asleep, dear friend,
 in peace :
 A little while, and age and
 sorrow cease ;
 A little while, and life reborn
 annuls
 Loss and decay and death, and all
 is love.

11

' Vien dietro a me e lascia dir le genti.'
 DANTE.

' Contando i casi della vita nostra.'
 PETRARCA.

Many in aftertimes will say of you
 ' He loved her '—while of me what
 will they say ?
 Not that I loved you more than
 just in play,
 For fashion's sake as idle women do.
 Even let them prate ; who know not
 what we knew
 Of love and parting in exceeding
 pain,
 Of parting hopeless here to meet
 again,
 Hopeless on earth, and heaven is
 out of view.
 But by my heart of love laid bare to
 you,
 My love that you can make not
 void nor vain,
 Love that foregoes you but to claim
 anew
 Beyond this passage of the gate of
 death,
 I charge you at the Judgment
 make it plain
 My love of you was life and not a
 breath,

12

'Amor che ne la mente mi ragiona.'

DANTE.

'Amor vien nel bel viso di costei.'

PETRARCA.

If there be any one can take my place
And make you happy whom I
grieve to grieve,

Think not that I can grudge it,
but believe

I do commend you to that nobler
grace,

That readier wit than mine, that
sweeter face;

Yea, since your riches make me
rich, conceive

I too am crowned, while bridal
crowns I weave,

And thread the bridal dance with
jocund pace.

For if I did not love you, it might be
That I should grudge you some
one dear delight;

But since the heart is yours
that was mine own,

Your pleasure is my pleasure,
right my right,

Your honourable freedom makes me
free,

And you companioned I am not
alone.

13

'E drizzeremo gli occhi al Primo Amore.'

DANTE.

'Ma trovo peso non da le mie braccia.'

PETRARCA.

If I could trust mine own self with
your fate,

Shall I not rather trust it in God's
hand?

Without Whose Will one lily doth
not stand,

Nor sparrow fall at his appointed
date;

Who numbereth the innumerable
sand,

Who weighs the wind and water
with a weight,

To Whom the world is neither small
nor great,

Whose knowledge foreknew every
plan we planned.

Searching my heart for all that
touches you,

I find there only love and love's
goodwill

Helpless to help and impotent to
do,

Of understanding dull, of sight most
dim;

And therefore I commend you back
to Him

Whose love your love's capacity
can fill.

14

'E la Sua Volontade è nostra pace.'

DANTE.

'Sol con questi pensier, con altre chiome.'

PETRARCA.

Youth gone, and beauty gone if ever
there

Dwelt beauty in so poor a face as
this;

Youth gone and beauty, what
remains of bliss?

I will not bind fresh roses in my hair,
To shame a cheek at best but little
fair,—

Leave youth his roses, who can
bear a thorn,—

I will not seek for blossoms anywhere,
Except such common flowers as
blow with corn.

Youth gone and beauty gone, what
doth remain?

The longing of a heart pent up
 forlorn,
 A silent heart whose silence
 loves and longs ;
 The silence of a heart which
 sang its songs
 While youth and beauty made a
 summer morn,
 Silence of love that cannot sing
 again.

Before 1882.

AN OLD-WORLD THICKET

'Una selva oscura.'—DANTE.

AWAKE or sleeping (for I know not
 which)

I was or was not mazed within a
 wood

Where every mother-bird brought
 up her brood

Safe in some leafy niche

Of oak or ash, of cypress or of
 beech,

Of silvery aspen trembling delicately,
 Of plane or warmer-tinted sycamore,

Of elm that dies in secret from
 the core,

Of ivy weak and free,

Of pines, of all green lofty things
 that be.

Such birds they seemed as challenged
 each desire ;

Like spots of azure heaven upon
 the wing,

Like downy emeralds that alight
 and sing,

Like actual coals on fire,

Like anything they seemed, and
 everything.

Such mirth they made, such warblings and such chat,
 With tongue of music in a well-tuned beak,
 They seemed to speak more wisdom than we speak,
 To make our music flat
 And all our subtlest reasonings wild or weak.

Their meat was nought but flowers like butterflies,
 With berries coral-coloured or like gold ;
 Their drink was only dew, which blossoms hold
 Deep where the honey lies ;
 Their wings and tails were lit by sparkling eyes.

The shade wherein they revelled was a shade
 That danced and twinkled to the unseen sun ;
 Branches and leaves cast shadows one by one,
 And all their shadows swayed
 In breaths of air that rustled and that played.

A sound of waters neither rose nor sank,
 And spread a sense of freshness through the air ;
 It seemed not here or there, but everywhere,
 As if the whole earth drank,
 Root fathom-deep and strawberry on its bank.

But I who saw such things as I have said
 Was overdone with utter weariness ;

And walked in care, as one whom
 fears oppress,
 Because above his head
 Death hangs, or damage, or the
 dearth of bread.

Each sore defeat of my defeated life
 Faced and outfaced me in that
 bitter hour ;
 And turned to yearning palsy all
 my power,
 And all my peace to strife,
 Self stabbing self with keen lack-pity
 knife.

Sweetness of beauty moved me to
 despair,
 Stung me to anger by its mere
 content,
 Made me all lonely on that way
 I went,
 Piled care upon my care,
 Brimmed full my cup, and stripped
 me empty and bare :

For all that was but showed what
 all was not,
 But gave clear proof of what
 might never be ;
 Making more destitute my poverty,
 And yet more blank my lot,
 And me much sadder by its jubilee.

Therefore I sat me down : for where-
 fore walk ?
 And closed mine eyes : for where-
 fore see or hear ?

Alas, I had no shutter to mine ear,
 And could not shun the talk
 Of all rejoicing creatures far or
 near.

Without my will I hearkened and I
 heard
 (Asleep or waking, for I know not
 which),

R

Till note by note the music
 changed its pitch ;
 Bird ceased to answer bird,
 And every wind sighed softly if it
 stirred.

The drip of widening waters seemed
 to weep,
 All fountains sobbed and gurgled
 as they sprang,
 Somewhere a cataract cried out in
 its leap
 Sheer down a headlong steep ;
 High over all cloud-thunders gave
 a clang.

Such universal sound of lamentation
 I heard and felt, fain not to feel
 or hear ;
 Nought else there seemed but
 anguish far and near ;
 Nought else but all creation
 Moaning and groaning wrung by
 pain or fear,

Shuddering in the misery of its
 doom :
 My heart then rose a rebel against
 light,
 Scouring all earth and heaven
 and depth and height,
 Ingathering wrath and gloom,
 Ingathering wrath to wrath and
 night to night.

Ah me, the bitterness of such revolt,
 All impotent, all hateful, and all
 hate,
 That kicks and breaks itself against
 the bolt
 Of an imprisoning fate,
 And vainly shakes, and cannot
 shake the gate.

F

Agony to agony, deep called to deep,

Out of the deep I called of my desire ;

My strength was weakness and my heart was fire ;

Mine eyes, that would not weep
Or sleep, scaled height and depth,
and could not sleep ;

The eyes, I mean, of my rebellious soul,

For still my bodily eyes were closed and dark :

A random thing I seemed without a mark,

Racing without a goal,
Adrift upon life's sea without an ark.

More leaden than the actual self of lead

Outer and inner darkness weighed on me.

The tide of anger ebbed. Then fierce and free

Surged full above my head
The moaning tide of helpless misery.

Why should I breathe, whose breath was but a sigh ?

Why should I live, who drew such painful breath ?

Oh weary work, the unanswerable why !—

Yet I, why should I die,
Who had no hope in life, no hope in death ?

Grasses and mosses and the fallen leaf

Make peaceful bed for an indefinite term ;

But underneath the grass there gnaws a worm—

Haply, there gnaws a grief—
Both, haply always ; not, as now, so brief.

The pleasure I remember, it is past ;
The pain I feel is passing passing by ;

Thus all the world is passing, and thus I :

All things that cannot last
Have grown familiar, and are born to die.

And being familiar, have so long been borne

That habit trains us not to break but bend :

Mourning grows natural to us who mourn

In foresight of an end,
But that which ends not who shall brave or mend ?

Surely the ripe fruits tremble on their bough,

They cling and linger trembling till they drop :

I, trembling, cling to dying life ; for how

Face the perpetual Now ?
Birthless and deathless, void of start or stop,

Void of repentance, void of hope and fear,

Of possibility, alternative,
Of all that ever made us bear to live

From night to morning here,
Of promise even which has no gift to give.

The wood, and every creature of the
wood,
Seemed mourning with me in an
undertone ;
Soft scattered chirpings and a
windy moan,
Trees rustling, where they stood
And shivered, showed compassion
for my mood.

Rage to despair ; and now despair
had turned
Back to self-pity and mere weariness,
With yearnings like a smouldering
fire that burned,
And might grow more or less,
And might die out or wax to white
excess.

Without, within me, music seemed
to be ;
Something not music, yet most
musical,
Silence and sound in heavenly
harmony ;
At length a pattering fall
Of feet, a bell, and bleatings, broke
through all.

Then I looked up. The wood lay
in a glow
From golden sunset and from
ruddy sky ;
The sun had stooped to earth
though once so high ;
Had stooped to earth, in slow
Warm dying loveliness brought near
and low.

Each water drop made answer to
the light,
Lit up a spark and showed the
sun his face ;

Soft purple shadows paved the
grassy space
And crept from height to height,
From height to loftier height crept
up apace.

While opposite the sun a gazing
moon
Put on his glory for her coronet,
Kindling her luminous coldness to
its noon,
As his great splendour set ;
One only star made up her train
as yet.

Each twig was tipped with gold, each
leaf was edged
And veined with gold from the
gold-flooded west ;
Each mother-bird, and mate-bird,
and unfledged
Nestling, and curious nest,
Displayed a gilded moss or beak
or breast.

And fling peacefully between the
trees,
Having the moon behind them,
and the sun
Full in their meek mild faces, walked
at ease
A homeward flock, at peace
With one another and with every
one.

A patriarchal ram with tinkling bell
Led all his kin ; sometimes one
browsing sheep
Hung back a moment, or one
lamb would leap
And frolic in a dell ;
Yet still they kept together, journey-
ing well,

And bleating, one or other, many or
few,
Journeying together toward the
sunlit west ;
Mild face byface, and woolly breast
by breast,
Patient, sun-brightened too,
Still journeying toward the sunset
and their rest.

Before 1882.

ALL THY WORKS PRAISE THEE, O LORD

A PROCESSIONAL OF CREATION

ALL

I ALL-CREATION sing my song of
praise
To God Who made me and vouch-
safes my days,
And sends me forth by multitudinous
ways.

SERAPH

I, like my Brethren, burn eternally
With love of Him Who is Love, and
loveth me ;
The Holy, Holy, Holy Unity.

CHERUB

I, with my Brethren, gaze eternally
On Him Who is Wisdom, and Who
knoweth me ;
The Holy, Holy, Holy Trinity.

ALL ANGELS

We rule, we serve, we work, we
store His treasure,
Whose vessels are we brimmed with
strength and pleasure ;
Our joys fulfil, yea, overflow our
measure.

HEAVENS

We float before the Presence Infinite,
We cluster round the Throne in our
delight,
Revolving and rejoicing in God's
sight.

FIRMAMENT

I, blue and beautiful, and framed of
air,
At sunrise and at sunset grow most
fair ;
His glory by my glories I declare.

POWERS

We Powers are powers because He
makes us strong ;
Wherefore we roll all rolling orbs
along,
We move all moving things, and
sing our song.

SUN

I blaze to Him in mine engarlanding
Of rays, I flame His whole burnt-
offering,
While as a bridegroom I rejoice
and sing.

MOON

I follow, and am fair, and do His
Will ;
Through all my changes I am faith-
ful still,
Full-orbed or strait His mandate to
fulfil.

STARS

We Star-hosts numerous, innumer-
ous,
Throng space with energy untumultu-
ous,
And work His Will Whose eye
beholdeth us.

GALAXIES AND NEBULÆ

No thing is far or near ; and there-
fore we
Float neither far nor near ; but
where we be
Weave dances round the Throne
perpetually.

COMETS AND METEORS

Our lights dart here and there,
whirl to and fro,
We flash and vanish, we die down
and glow ;
All doing His Will Who bids us do
it so.

SHOWERS

We give ourselves ; and be we great
or small,
Thus are we made like Him Who
giveth all,
Like Him Whose gracious pleasure
bids us fall.

DEWS

We give ourselves in silent secret
ways,
Spending and spent in silence full
of grace ;
And thus are made like God, and
show His praise.

WINDS

We sift the air and winnow all the
earth ;
And God Who poised our weights
and weighs our worth
Accepts the worship of our solemn
mirth.

FIRE

My power and strength are His
Who fashioned me,
Ordained me image of His Jealousy,

Forged me His weapon fierce ex-
ceedingly.

HEAT

I glow unto His glory, and do good :
I glow, and bring to life both bud
and brood ;
I glow, and ripen harvest-crops for
food.

WINTER AND SUMMER

Our wealth and joys and beauties
celebrate
His wealth of beauty Who sustains
our state,
Before Whose changelessness we
alternate.

SPRING AND AUTUMN

I hope,—
And I remember,—
We give place
Either to other with contented grace,
Acceptable and lovely all our days.

FROST

I make the unstable stable, binding
fast
The world of waters prone to ripple
past :
Thus praise I God, Whose mercies
I forecast.

COLD

I rouse and goad the slothful apt
to nod,
I stir and urge the laggards with
my rod :
My praise is not of men, yet I
praise God.

SNOW

My whiteness shadoweth Him Who
is most fair,

All spotless: yea, my whiteness which
I wear
Exalts His Purity beyond compare.

VAPOURS

We darken sun and moon, and blot
the day,
The good Will of our Maker to obey :
Till to the glory of God we pass
away.

NIGHT

Moon and all stars I don for diadem
To make me fair : I cast myself and
them
Before His feet Who knows us gem
from gem.

DAY

I shout before Him in my plenitude
Of light and warmth, of hope and
wealth and food ;
Ascribing all good to the Only Good.

LIGHT AND DARKNESS

I am God's dwelling-place,—
And also I
Make His pavilion,—
Lo, we bide and fly
Exulting in the Will of God Most
High.

LIGHTNING AND THUNDER

We indivisible flash forth His Fame,
We thunder forth the glory of His
Name,
In harmony of resonance and flame.

CLOUDS

Sweet is our store, exhaled from sea
or river :
We wear a rainbow, praising God
the Giver
Because His mercy is for ever and
ever.

EARTH

I rest in Him rejoicing : resting so
And so rejoicing, in that I am low ;
Yet known of Him, and following on
to know.

MOUNTAINS

Our heights which laud Him sink
abased before
Him higher than the highest ever-
more :
God higher than the highest we
adore.

HILLS

We green-tops praise Him, and we
fruitful heads,
Whereon the sunshine and the dew
He sheds :
We green-tops praise Him, rising
from our beds.

GREEN THINGS

We all green things, we blossoms
bright or dim,
Trees, bushes, brushwood, corn and
grasses slim,
We lift our many-favoured lauds to
Him.

ROSE—LILY—VIOLET

I praise Him on my thorn which I
adorn,—
And I, amid my world of thistle and
thorn,—
And I, within my veil where I am born.

APPLE—CITRON—POMEGRANATE

We Apple-blossom, Citron, Pome-
granate,
We clothed of God without our toil
and fret,
We offer fatness where His Throne
is set.

VINE—CEDAR—PALM

I proffer Him my sweetness, who
 am sweet,—
 I bow my strength in fragrance at
 His feet,—
 I wave myself before His Judgment
 seat.

MEDICINAL HERBS

I bring refreshment,—
 I bring ease and calm,—
 I lavish strength and healing,—
 I am balm,—
 We work His pitiful Will and chant
 our psalm.

A SPRING

Clear my pure fountain, clear and
 pure my rill,
 My fountain and mine outflow deep
 and still;
 I set His semblance forth and do
 His Will.

SEA

To-day I praise God with a sparkling
 face,
 My thousand thousand waves all
 uttering praise:
 To-morrow I commit me to His
 Grace.

FLOODS

We spring and swell meandering to
 and fro,
 From height to depth, from depth to
 depth we flow,
 We fertilize the world, and praise
 Him so.

WHALES AND SEA MAMMALS

We Whales and Monsters gambol
 in His sight,

Rejoicing every day and every
 night,
 Safe in the tender keeping of His
 Might.

FISHES

Our fashions and our colours and
 our speeds
 Set forth His praise Who framed us
 and Who feeds,
 Who knows our number and regards
 our needs.

BIRDS

Winged Angels of this visible world,
 we fly
 To sing God's praises in the lofty
 sky;
 We scale the height to praise our
 Lord most High.

EAGLE AND DOVE

I the sun-gazing Eagle,—
 I the Dove
 With plumes of softness and a note
 of love,—
 We praise by divers gifts One God
 above.

BEASTS AND CATTLE

We forest Beasts,—
 We Beasts of hill or cave,—
 We border-loving Creatures of the
 wave,—
 We praise our King with voices deep
 and grave.

SMALL ANIMALS

God forms us weak and small, but
 pours out all
 We need, and notes us while we
 stand or fall:
 Wherefore we praise Him, weak and
 safe and small.

LAMB

I praise my loving Lord, Who
maketh me
His type by harmless sweet simplicity :
Yet He the Lamb of lambs incomparably.

LION

I praise the Lion of the Royal Race,
Strongest in fight and swiftest in the chase :
With all my might I leap and lavish
praise.

ALL MEN

All creatures sing around us, and
we sing :
We bring our own selves as our
offering,
Our very selves we render to our
King.

ISRAEL

Flock of our Shepherd's pasture and
His fold,
Purchased and well-beloved from
days of old,
We tell His praise which still remains
untold.

PRIESTS

We free-will Shepherds tend His
sheep and feed ;
We follow Him while caring for
their need ;
We follow praising Him, and them
we lead.

SERVANTS OF GOD

We love God, for He loves us ; we
are free
In serving Him, who serve Him
willingly :
As kings we reign, and praise His
Majesty.

HOLY AND HUMBLE PERSONS

All humble souls He calls and
sanctifies ;
All holy souls He calls to make
them wise ;
Accepting all, His free-will sacrifice.

BABES

He maketh me,—
And me,—
And me,—
To be
His blessed little ones around His
knee,
Who praise Him by mere love confidently.

WOMEN

God makes our service love, and
makes our wage
Love : so we wend on patient pilgrimage,
Extolling Him by love from age to
age.

MEN

God gives us power to rule : He
gives us power
To rule ourselves, and prune the
exuberant flower
Of youth, and worship Him hour
after hour.

SPIRITS AND SOULS—

Lo in the hidden world we chant
our chant
To Him Who fills us that we nothing
want,
To Him Whose bounty leaves our
craving scant.

OF BABES—

With milky mouths we praise God,
from the breast

Called home betimes to rest the
perfect rest,
By love and joy fulfilling His behest.

OF WOMEN—

We praise His Will which made us
what He would,
His Will which fashioned us and
called us good,
His Will our plenary beatitude.

OF MEN

We praise His Will Who bore with
us so long,
Who out of weakness wrought us
swift and strong,
Champions of right and putters-
down of wrong.

ALL

Let everything that hath or hath
not breath,
Let days and endless days, let life
and death,
Praise God, praise God, praise God,
His creature saith.

Before 1882.

LATER LIFE : A DOUBLE
SONNET OF SONNETS

I

BEFORE the mountains were brought
forth, before
Earth and the world were made,
then God was God :
And God will still be God when
flames shall roar
Round earth and heaven dis-
solving at His nod :
And this God is our God, even
while His rod

Of righteous wrath falls on us smiting
sore :

And this God is our God for ever-
more,

Through life, through death, while
clod returns to clod.

For though He slay us we will trust
in Him ;

We will flock home to Him by
divers ways :

Yea, though He slay us we will
vaunt His praise,

Serving and loving with the Cheru-
bim,

Watching and loving with the Sera-
phim,

Our very selves His praise through
endless days.

2

Rend hearts and rend not garments
for our sins ;

Gird sackcloth not on body but
on soul ;

Grovel in dust with faces toward
the goal

Nor won nor neared : he only laughs
who wins.

Not neared the goal, the race too
late begins ;

All left undone, we have yet to
do the whole ;

The sun is hurrying west and
toward the pole

Where darkness waits for earth with
all her kins.

Let us to-day while it is called to-day
Set out, if utmost speed may yet
avail—

The shadows lengthen and the
light grows pale :

For who through darkness and
the shadow of death,

Darkness that may be felt, shall find
 a way,
 Blind-eyed, deaf-eared, and
 choked with failing breath?

3

Thou Who didst make and knowest
 whereof we are made,
 Oh bear in mind our dust and
 nothingness,
 Our wordless tearless numbness
 of distress:

Bear Thou in mind the burden Thou
 hast laid

Upon us, and our feebleness unstayed
 Except Thou stay us: for the
 long long race

Which stretches far and far before
 our face

Thou knowest, — remember Thou
 whereof we are made.

If making makes us Thine then
 Thine we are,

And if redemption we are twice
 Thine own:

If once Thou didst come down from
 heaven afar

To seek us and to find us, how not
 save?

Comfort us, save us, leave us not
 alone,

Thou who didst die our death and
 fill our grave.

4

So tired am I, so weary of to-day,
 So unrefreshed from foregone
 weariness,

So overburdened by foreseen
 distress,

So lagging and so stumbling on my
 way,

I scarce can rouse myself to watch
 or pray,

To hope, or aim, or toil for more
 or less,—

Ah always less and less, even
 while I press

Forward and toil and aim as best I
 may.

Half-starved of soul and heartsick
 utterly,

Yet lift I up my heart and soul
 and eyes

(Which fail in looking upward)
 toward the prize:

Me, Lord, Thou seest though I see
 not Thee;

Me now, as once the Thief in
 Paradise,

Even me, O Lord my Lord, remem-
 ber me.

5

Lord, Thou Thyself art Love and
 only Thou;

Yet I who am not love would fain
 love Thee;

But Thou alone being Love canst
 furnish me

With that same love my heart is
 craving now.

Allow my plea! for if Thou disallow,
 No second fountain can I find

but Thee;

No second hope or help is left to
 me,

No second anything, but only Thou.

O Love, accept, according my re-
 quest;

O Love, exhaust, fulfilling my
 desire:

Uphold me with the strength that
 cannot tire,

Nerve me to labour till Thou bid me
 rest,

Kindle my fire from Thine un-
 kindled fire,

And charm the willing heart from
out my breast.

6

We lack, yet cannot fix upon the lack :
Not this, nor that ; yet somewhat,
certainly.

We see the things we do not yearn
to see
Around us : and what see we glancing
back ?

Lost hopes that leave our hearts upon
the rack,

Hopes that were never ours yet
seemed to be,

For which we steered on life's salt
stormy sea

Braving the sunstroke and the frozen
pack.

If thus to look behind is all in vain,
And all in vain to look to left or
right,

Why face we not our future once
again,

Launching with hardier hearts across
the main,

Straining dim eyes to catch the
invisible sight,

And strong to bear ourselves in
patient pain ?

7

To love and to remember ; that is
good :

To love and to forget ; that is
not well :

To lapse from love to hatred ;
that is hell

And death and torment, rightly
understood.

Soul dazed by love and sorrow,
cheer thy mood ;

More blest art thou than mortal
tongue can tell :

Ring not thy funeral but thy
marriage bell,
And salt with hope thy life's insipid
food.

Love is the goal, love is the way we
wend,

Love is our parallel unending line
Whose only perfect Parallel is
Christ,

Beginning not begun, End without
end :

For He Who hath the Heart
of God sufficed

Can satisfy all hearts,—yea, thine
and mine.

8

We feel and see with different hearts
and eyes :—

Ah Christ, if all our hearts could
meet in Thee,

How well it were for them and
well for me,

Our hearts Thy dear accepted sacri-
fice.

Thou, only Life of hearts and Light
of eyes,

Our life, our light, if once we turn
to Thee,

So be it, O Lord, to them and so
to me ;

Be all alike Thine own dear sacrifice.

Thou Who by death hast ransomed
us from death,

Thyself God's sole well-pleasing
Sacrifice,

Thine only sacred Self I plead
with Thee :

Make Thou it well for them
and well for me

That Thou hast given us souls and
wills and breath,

And hearts to love Thee, and to
see Thine eyes.

9

Star Sirius and the Pole Star dwell
afar

Beyond the drawings each of
other's strength.

One blazes through the brief
bright summer's length

Lavishing life-heat from a flaming
car ;

While one unchangeable upon a
throne

Broods o'er the frozen heart of
earth alone,

Content to reign the bright particular
star

Of some who wander or of some
who groan.

They own no drawings each of
other's strength,

Nor vibrate in a visible sympathy,
Nor veer along their courses
each toward each :

Yet are their orbits pitched in
harmony

Of one dear heaven, across whose
depth and length

Mayhap they talk together
without speech.

10

Tread softly ! all the earth is holy
ground.

It may be, could we look with
seeing eyes,

This spot we stand on is a
Paradise

Where dead have come to life and
lost been found,

Where Faith has triumphed, Martyr-
dom been crowned,

Where fools have foiled the wisdom
of the wise ;

From this same spot the dust of
saints may rise,
And the King's prisoners come to
light unbound.

O earth, earth, earth, hear thou thy
Maker's Word :

'Thy dead thou shalt give up,
nor hide thy slain.'

Some who went weeping forth
shall come again

Rejoicing from the east or from
the west,

As doves fly to their windows, love's
own bird

'Contented and desirous to the
nest.'¹

11

Lifelong our stumbles, lifelong our
regret,

Lifelong our efforts failing and
renewed,

While lifelong is our witness, 'God
is good,'

Who bore with us till now, bears
with us yet,

Who still remembers and will not
forget,

Who gives us light and warmth
and daily food ;

And gracious promises half under-
stood,

And glories half unveiled, whereon
to set

Our heart of hearts and eyes of our
desire ;

Uplifting us to longing and to
love,

Luring us upward from this world
of mire,

¹ 'Quali colombe dal disio chiamate
Con l'ali aperte e ferme al dolce nido
Volan per l'aer dal voler portate.'

Urging us to press on and mount
 above
 Ourselves and all we have had
 experience of,
 Mounting to Him in love's perpetual
 fire.

12

A dream there is wherein we are
 fain to scream,
 While struggling with ourselves
 we cannot speak :
 And much of all our waking life,
 as weak
 And misconceived, eludes us like
 the dream.
 For half life's seemings are not what
 they seem,
 And vain the laughs we laugh,
 the shrieks we shriek ;
 Yea, all is vain that mars the
 settled meek
 Contented quiet of our daily theme.
 When I was young I deemed that
 sweets are sweet :
 But now I deem some searching
 bitters are
 Sweeter than sweets, and more
 refreshing far,
 And to be relished more, and
 more desired,
 And more to be pursued on eager
 feet,
 On feet untired, and still on feet
 though tired.

13

Shame is a shadow cast by sin : yet
 shame
 Itself may be a glory and a grace,
 Refashioning the sin-disfashioned
 face ;
 A nobler bruit than hollow-sounded
 fame,

A new-lit lustre on a tarnished name,
 One virtue pent within an evil
 place,
 Strength for the fight, and swift-
 ness for the race,
 A stinging salve, a life-requickening
 flame.

A salve so searching we may scarcely
 live,

A flame so fierce it seems that we
 must die,

An actual cautery thrust into
 the heart :

Nevertheless, men die not of
 such smart ;

And shame gives back what nothing
 else can give,

Man to himself,—then sets him
 up on high.

14

When Adam and when Eve left
 Paradise,

Did they love on and cling to-
 gether still,

Forgiving one another all that ill
 The twain had wrought on such a
 different wise ?

She propped upon his strength, and
 he in guise

Of lover though of lord, girt to
 fulfil

Their term of life and die when
 God should will ;

Lie down and sleep, and having
 slept arise.

Boast not against us, O our enemy !
 To-day we fall, but we shall rise
 again ;

We grope to-day, to-morrow we shall
 see :

What is to-day that we should fear
 to-day ?

A morrow cometh which shall sweep
away
Thee and thy realm of change and
death and pain.

15

Let woman fear to teach and bear to
learn,
Remembering the first woman's
first mistake.
Eve had for pupil the inquiring
snake,
Whose doubts she answered on a
great concern ;
But he the tables so contrived to turn,
It next was his to give and hers
to take ;

Till man deemed poison sweet for
her sweet sake,
And fired a train by which the world
must burn.
Did Adam love his Eve from first to
last ?

I think so ; as we love who works
us ill,
And wounds us to the quick, yet
loves us still.

Love pardons the unpardonable past :
Love in a dominant embrace holds
fast

His frailer self, and saves without
her will.

16

Our teachers teach that one and one
make two :

Later, Love rules that one and
one make one :

Abstruse the problems ! neither
need we shun,
But skilfully to each should yield its
due.

The narrower total seems to suit the
few,

The wider total suits the common
run ;

Each obvious in its sphere like
moon or sun ;

Both provable by me, and both by
you.

Befogged and witless, in a wordy maze
A groping stroll perhaps may do
us good ;

If cloyed we are with much we
have understood,
If tired of half our dusty world and
ways,

If sick of fasting, and if sick of
food ;—

And how about these long still-
lengthening days ?

17

Something this foggy day, a some-
thing which

Is neither of this fog nor of to-day,
Has set me dreaming of the winds
that play

Past certain cliffs, along one certain
beach,

And turn the topmost edge of
waves to spray :

Ah pleasant pebbly strand so far
away,

So out of reach while quite within
my reach,

As out of reach as India or Cathay !
I am sick of where I am and where

I am not,
I am sick of foresight and of
memory,

I am sick of all I have and all I see,
I am sick of self, and there is
nothing new ;

Oh weary impatient patience of my
lot !—

Thus with myself : how fares it,
Friends, with you ?

18

So late in Autumn half the world's
 asleep,
 And half the wakeful world looks
 pinched and pale ;
 For dampness now, not freshness,
 rides the gale ;
 And cold and colourless comes
 ashore the deep
 With tides that bluster or with
 tides that creep ;
 Now veiled uncouthness wears an
 uncouth veil
 Of fog, not sultry haze ; and blight
 and bale
 Have done their worst, and leaves
 rot on the heap.
 So late in Autumn one forgets the
 Spring,
 Forgets the Summer with its
 opulence,
 The callow birds that long have found
 a wing,
 The swallows that more lately gat
 them hence :
 Will anything like Spring, will any-
 thing
 Like Summer, rouse one day the
 slumbering sense ?

19

Here now is Winter. Winter, after all,
 Is not so drear as was my boding
 dream
 While Autumn gleamed its latest
 watery gleam
 On sapless leafage too inert to fall.
 Still leaves and berries clothe my
 garden wall
 Where ivy thrives on scantiest
 sunny beam ;
 Still here a bud and there a
 blossom seem
 Hopeful, and robin still is musical.

Leaves, flowers, and fruit, and one
 delightful song,
 Remain ; these days are short, but
 now the nights,
 Intense and long, hang out their
 utmost lights ;
 Such starry nights are long, yet not
 too long ;
 Frost nips the weak, while strengthen-
 ing still the strong
 Against that day when Spring sets
 all to rights.

20

A hundred thousand birds salute the
 day :—
 One solitary bird salutes the night :
 Its mellow grieving wiles our grief
 away,
 And tunes our weary watches to
 delight ;
 It seems to sing the thoughts we
 cannot say,
 To know and sing them, and to
 set them right ;
 Until we feel once more that May is
 May,
 And hope some buds may bloom
 without a blight.
 This solitary bird outweighs, outvies,
 The hundred thousand merry-
 making birds ;
 Whose innocent warbling's yet might
 make us wise,
 Would we but follow when they bid
 us rise,
 Would we but set their notes of
 praise to words
 And launch our hearts up with them
 to the skies.

21

A host of things I take on trust : I take
 The nightingales on trust, for few
 and far

Between those actual summer
moments are
When I have heard what melody
they make.
So chanced it once at Como on the
Lake :

But all things, then, waxed musical;
each star

Sang on its course, each breeze
sang on its car,
All harmonies sang to senses wide
awake.

All things in tune, myself not out of
tune,

Those nightingales were nightin-
gales indeed :

Yet truly an owl had satisfied my
need,

And wrought a rapture underneath
that moon,

Or simple sparrow chirping from
a reed ;

For June that night glowed like a
doubled June.

22

The mountains in their overwhelming
might

Moved me to sadness when I saw
them first,

And afterwards they moved me to
delight ;

Struck harmonies from silent
chords which burst

Out into song, a song by memory
nursed ;

For ever unrenewed by touch or sight
Sleeps the keen magic of each day
or night,

In pleasure and in wonder then
immersed.

All Switzerland behind us on the
ascent,

All Italy before us, we plunged
down

St. Gothard, garden of forget-
me-not :

Yet why should such a flower
choose such a spot ?

Could we forget that way which once
we went

Though not one flower had
bloomed to weave its crown ?

23

Beyond the seas we know stretch
seas unknown,

Blue and bright-coloured for our
dim and green ;

Beyond the lands we see stretch
lands unseen

With many-tinted tangle overgrown ;
And icebound seas there are like seas
of stone,

Serenely stormless as death lies
serene ;

And lifeless tracts of sand, which
intervene

Betwixt the lands where living flowers
are blown.

This dead and living world befits our
case

Who live and die : we live in
wearied hope,

We die in hope not dead ; we run a
race

To-day, and find no present halting-
place ;

All things we see lie far within
our scope,

And still we peer beyond with craving
face.

24

The wise do send their hearts before
them to

Dear blessed Heaven, despite the
veil between ;

The foolish nurse their hearts
within the screen
Of this familiar world, where all we do
Or have is old, for there is nothing
new :

Yet elder far that world we have
not seen ;

God's Presence antedates what
else hath been :

Many the foolish seem, the wise
seem few.

Oh foolishhest fond folly of a heart
Divided, neither here nor there at
rest !

That hankers after Heaven, but
clings to earth ;

That neither here nor there
knows thorough mirth,

Half-choosing, wholly missing, the
good part :—

Oh fool among the foolish, in thy
quest !

25

When we consider what this life we
lead

Is not, and is: how full of toil
and pain,

How blank of rest and of sub-
stantial gain,

Beset by hunger earth can never feed,
And propping half our hearts upon
a reed ;

We cease to mourn lost treasures,
mourned in vain,

Lost treasures we are fain and yet
not fain

To fetch back for a solace of our need.
For who that feel this burden and
this strain,

This wide vacuity of hope and
heart,

Would bring their cherished well-
beloved again :

R

To bleed with them and wince
beneath the smart,

To have with stinted bliss such lavish
bane,

To hold in lieu of all so poor a
part ?

26

This Life is full of numbness and of
balk,

Of haltingness and baffled short-
coming,

Of promise unfulfilled, of every-
thing

That is puffed vanity and empty talk :
Its very bud hangs cankered on the
stalk,

Its very song-bird trails a broken
wing,

Its very Spring is not indeed like
Spring,

But sighs like Autumn round an
aimless walk.

This Life we live is dead for all its
breath ;

Death's self it is, set off on
pilgrimage,

Travelling with tottering steps the
first short stage :

The second stage is one mere
desert dust

Where Death sits veiled amid
creation's rust :—

Unveil thy face, O Death who art
not Death.

27

I have dreamed of Death :—what
will it be to die

Not in a dream, but in the literal
truth,

With all Death's adjuncts ghastly
and uncouth,

The pang that is the last and the
last sigh ?

G

Too dulled, it may be, for a last
 good-bye,
 Too comfortless for any one to
 soothe,
 A helpless charmless spectacle of
 ruth
 Through long last hours, so long
 while yet they fly.
 So long to those who hopeless in
 their fear
 Watch the slow breath and look
 for what they dread :
 While I supine with ears that cease
 to hear,
 With eyes that glaze, with heart-
 pulse running down
 (Alas ! no saint rejoicing on her bed),
 May miss the goal at last, may miss
 a crown.

28

In life our absent friend is far away :
 But death may bring our friend
 exceeding near,

Show him familiar faces long so
 dear
 And lead him back in reach of words
 we say.
 He only cannot utter yea or nay
 In any voice accustomed to our
 ear ;
 He only cannot make his face
 appear
 And turn the sun back on our
 shadowed day.
 The dead may be around us, dear
 and dead ;
 The unforgotten dearest dead may
 be
 Watching us with unslumbering
 eyes and heart,
 Brimful of words which cannot yet
 be said,
 Brimful of knowledge they may
 not impart,
 Brimful of love for you and love
 for me.

Before 1882.

JUVENILIA

TO MY MOTHER ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF HER BIRTH

(Presented with a Nosegay)
 TO-DAY'S your natal day ;
 Sweet flowers I bring :
 Mother, accept I pray
 My offering.
 And may you happy live,
 And long us bless ;
 Receiving as you give
 Great happiness.

27 April 1842.

THE CHINAMAN

'CENTRE of Earth !' a Chinaman
 he said,
 And bent over a map his pig-tailed
 head,—
 That map in which, portrayed in
 colours bright,
 China, all dazzling, burst upon the
 sight ;
 'Centre of Earth !' repeatedly he
 cries,
 'Land of the brave, the beautiful,
 the wise !'

Thus he exclaimed ; when lo his
words arrested
Showed what sharp agony his head
had tested.
He feels a tug—another, and
another—
And quick exclaims, ‘Hallo ! what’s
now the bother ?’
But soon, alas, perceives. And, ‘Why,
false night,
Why not from men shut out the
hateful sight ?
The faithless English have cut off
my tail,
And left me my sad fortunes to
bewail.
Now in the streets I can no more
appear,
For all the other men a pig-tail wear.’
He said, and furious cast into the fire
His tail : those flames became its
funeral-pyre.

1842.

HYMN

To the God who reigns on high,
To the Eternal Majesty,
To the Blessed Trinity,
Glory on earth be given,
In the sea and in the sky,
And in the highest heaven.

2 July 1843.

LOVE AND HOPE

LOVE for ever dwells in
heaven,—
Hope entereth not there.
To despairing man Love’s
given,—

Hope dwells not with despair.
Love reigneth high, and reigneth low,
and reigneth everywhere.

In the inmost heart Love
dwelleth,—
It may not quenched be ;
E’en when the life-blood wellet, h
Its fond effects we see
In the name that leaves the lips the
last — fades last from
memory.

And when we shall awaken,
Ascending to the sky,
Though Hope shall have
forsaken,
Sweet Love shall never die :
For perfect Love and perfect bliss
shall be our lot on high.

9 October 1843.

ON ALBINA

THE roses lingered in her cheeks
When fair Albina fainted ;
O gentle reader, could it be
That fair Albina painted ?

June 1844.

FORGET ME NOT

‘FORGET me not, forget me not !’
The maiden once did say,
When to some far-off battlefield
Her lover sped away.

‘Forget me not, forget me not !’
Says now the chamber-maid,
When the traveller on his journey
No more will be delayed.

19 August 1844.

CHARITY

I PRAISED the myrtle and the rose,
 At sunrise in their beauty lying :
 I passed them at the short day's
 close,
 And both were dying.

The summer sun his rays was
 throwing
 Brightly : yet ere I sought my
 rest
 His last cold ray, more deeply
 glowing,
 Died in the west.

After this bleak world's stormy
 weather,
 All, all, save Love alone, shall
 die ;
 For Faith and Hope shall merge
 together
 In Charity.

20 September 1844.

EARTH AND HEAVEN

WATER calmly flowing,
 Sunlight deeply glowing,
 Swans some river riding
 That is gently gliding
 By the fresh green rushes,
 The sweet rose that blushes,
 Hyacinths whose dower
 Is both scent and flower,
 Skylark's soaring motion,
 Sunrise from the ocean,
 Jewels that lie sparkling
 'Neath the waters darkling,
 Seaweed, coral, amber,
 Flowers that climb and clamber
 Or more lowly flourish
 Where the earth may nourish :

All these are beautiful,
 Of beauty earth is full :
 Say, to our promised heaven
 Can greater charms be given ?
 Yes, for aye in heaven doth dwell,
 Glowing, indestructible,
 What here below finds tainted
 birth

In the corrupted sons of earth :
 For, filling there and satisfying
 Man's soul unchanging and un-
 dying,
 Earth's fleeting joys and beauties
 far above,
 In heaven is Love.

28 December 1844.

LOVE EPHEMERAL

LOVE is sweet, and so are flowers
 Blooming in bright summer bowers ;
 So are waters, clear and pure,
 In some hidden fountain's store ;
 So is the soft southern breeze
 Sighing low among the trees ;
 So is the bright queen of heaven
 Reigning in the quiet even.
 Yet the pallid moon may breed
 Madness in man's feeble seed ;
 And the wind's soft influence
 Often breathes the pestilence ;
 And the waves may sullied be
 As they hurry to the sea ;
 Flowers soon must fade away :
 Love endures but for a day.

25 February 1845.

BURIAL ANTHEM

FLESH of our flesh, bone of our
 bone—
 For thou and we in Christ are one—
 Thy soul unto its rest hath flown,

And thou hast left us all alone
Our weary race to run
In doubt and want and sin and
pain,

Whilst thou wilt never sin again.
For us remaineth heaviness ;
Thou never more shalt feel dis-
tress,—

For thou hast found repose
Beside the bright eternal river,
That clear and pure flows on for ever
And sings as on it flows.

And it is better far for thee
To reach at once thy rest
Than share with us earth's misery,
Or tainted joy at best.

Brother, we will not mourn for thee,
Although our hearts be weary
Of struggling with our enemy
When all around is dreary :

But we will pray that still we may
Press onward in the narrow way,
With a calm thankful resignation,
And joy in this our desolation ;
And we will hope at length to be
With our Great Head—and, friend,
with thee—

Beside that river blest.

3 March 1845.

LINES TO MY GRANDFATHER

DEAR Grandpapa,—To be obedient,
I'll try and write a letter ;
Which (as I hope you'll deem ex-
pedient)
Must serve for lack of better.

My Muse of late was not prolific ;
And sometimes I must feel
To make a verse a task terrific
Rather of woe than weal.

As I have met with no adventure
Of wonder and refulgence,
I must write plain things at a
venture,
And trust to your indulgence.

The apple-tree is showing
Its blossom of bright red,
With a soft colour glowing
Upon its leafy bed.

The pear-tree's pure white blossom
Like stainless snow is seen ;
And all earth's genial bosom
Is clothed with varied green.

The fragrant may is blooming,
The yellow cowslip blows ;
Among its leaves entombing
Peeps forth the pale primrose.

The king-cup flowers and daisies
Are opening hard by ;
And many another raises
Its head, to please and die.

I love the gay wild flowers
Waving in fresh Spring air :—
Give me uncultured bowers
Before the bright parterre.

And now my letter is concluded ;
To do well I have striven ;
And, though news is well-nigh ex-
cluded,
I hope to be forgiven.

With love to all the beautiful
And those who cannot slaughter,
I sign myself—Your dutiful
Affectionate grand-daughter.

1 May 1845.

SUMMER

HARK to the song of greeting !
 The tall trees
 Murmur their welcome in the
 southern breeze ;
 Amid the thickest foliage many a
 bird

Sits singing, their shrill matins
 scarcely heard

One by one, but all together
 Welcoming the sunny weather ;
 In every bower hums a bee
 Fluttering melodiously ;
 Murmurs joy in every brook,
 Rippling with a pleasant look :
 What greet they with their guile-
 less bliss ?

What welcome with a song like
 this ?

See in the south a radiant form,
 Her fair head crowned with
 roses ;

From her bright footpath flies the
 storm ;

Upon her breast reposes
 Many an unconfined tress,
 Golden, glossy, motionless.
 Face and form are love and light,
 Soft ineffably, yet bright.
 All her path is strewn with flowers ;
 Round her float the laughing Hours ;
 Heaven and Earth make joyful din,
 Welcoming sweet Summer in.

And now she alights on the earth
 To play with her children the
 flowers ;

She touches the stems, and the buds
 have birth,
 And gently she trains them in
 bowers.

And the bees and the birds are
 glad,

And the wind catches warmth
 from her breath,

And around her is nothing sad
 Nor any traces of death.

See now she lays her down
 With roses for her crown,
 With jessamine and myrtle
 Forming her fragrant kirtle.
 Conquered by softest slumbers,
 No more the hours she numbers—
 The hours that intervene

Ere she may wing her flight
 Far from this smiling scene

With all her love and light,
 And leave the flowers and the
 summer bowers

To wither in autumn and winter
 hours.

And must they wither then ?

Their life and their perfume
 Sinking so soon again

Into their earthy tomb.

Let us bind her as she lies
 Ere the fleeting moment flies,
 Hand and foot and arm and bosom,
 With a chain of bud and blossom ;
 Twine red roses round her hands ;
 Round her feet twine myrtle bands.
 Heap up flowers, higher, higher,—
 Tulips like a glowing fire,
 Clematis of milky whiteness,
 Sweet geraniums' varied brightness,
 Honeysuckle, commeline,
 Roses, myrtles, jessamine ;
 Heap them higher, bloom on bloom,
 Bury her as in a tomb.

But alas they are withered all,
 And how can dead flowers
 bind her ?

She pushes away her pall,

And she leaves the dead behind
her :

And she flies across the seas,
To gladden for a time
The blossoms and the bees
Of some far-distant clime.

4 December 1845.

SERENADE

COME, wander forth with me : the
orange flowers

Breathe faintest perfume from the
summer bowers.

Come, wander forth with me : the
moon on high

Shines proudly in a flood of brilliancy;
Around her car each burning star
Gleams like a beacon from afar.
The night wind scarce disturbs
the sea

As it sighs forth so languidly,
Laden with sweetness like a bee ;
And all is still, below, above,
Save murmurs of the turtle-dove
That murmurs ever of its love.

For now 'tis the hour, the balmy
hour,

When the strains of love have
chiefly power ;

When the maid looks forth from
her latticed bower,

With a gentle yielding smile,
Donning her mantle all the while.
Now the moon beams down on
high

From her halo brilliantly,
By the dark clouds unencumbered
That once o'er her pale face
slumbered :

Far from her mild rays flutters
Folly,

For on them floats calm Melan-
choly ;—

A passionless sadness without
dread,

Like the thought of those we love,
long dead ;

Full of hope and chastened joy,
Heavenly, without earth's alloy.

Listen, dearest : all is quiet—
Slumbering the world's toil and
riot ;

And all is fair in earth and sky and
sea.

Come, wander forth with me.

4 December 1845.

THE END OF TIME

THOU who art dreary

With a cureless woe,

Thou who art weary

Of all things below,

Thou who art weeping

By the loved sick bed,

Thou who art keeping

Watches o'er the dead,—

Hope, hope ! old Time flies fast
upon his way,

And soon will cease the night, and
soon will dawn the day.

The rose blooms brightly,

But it fades ere night ;

And youth flies lightly,

Yet how sure its flight !

And still the river

Merges in the sea ;

And Death reigns ever

Whilst old Time shall be ;—

Yet hope ! old Time flies fast upon
his way,

And soon will cease the night, and
soon will dawn the day.

All we most cherish

In this world below,

What though it perish ?
 It has aye been so.
 So through all ages
 It has ever been,
 To fools and sages,
 Noble men and mean :—
 Yet hope, still hope ! for Time
 flies on his way,
 And soon will end the night, and
 soon will dawn the day.

All of each nation
 Shall that morning see
 With exultation
 Or with misery :
 From watery slumbers,
 From the opening sod,
 Shall rise up numbers
 To be judged by God.
 Then hope and fear, for Time
 speeds on his way,
 And soon must end the night, and
 soon must dawn the day.

9 December 1845.

COUPLET

‘COME cheer up, my lads, ’tis to
 glory we steer’—
 As the soldier remarked whose post
 lay in the rear.

Circa 1845.

AMORE E DOVERE

CHIAMI il mio core
 Crudele, altero :
 No non è vero,
 Crudel non è :
 T’ amo, t’ amai—
 E tu lo sai -
 Men del dovere,
 Ma più di me.

O ruscelletto,
 Dì al Dio d’ Amore
 Che questo petto,
 Che questo core,
 A lui ricetto
 Più non darà.
 L’ alme tradisce
 Senza rimorso ;
 Non compatisce,
 Non dà soccorso,
 E si nudrisce
 Di crudeltà.—

T’ intendo, ti lagni,
 Mio povero core ;
 T’ intendo, l’ Amore
 Si lagna di me.
 Deh placati alfine !
 Mi pungon le spine
 Che vengon da te.

1845 to 1847.

MOTHER AND CHILD

‘WHAT art thou thinking of,’ said
 the mother,
 ‘What art thou thinking of, my
 child?’
 ‘I was thinking of heaven,’ he
 answered her,
 And looked up in her face and
 smiled.

‘And what didst thou think of
 heaven?’ she said ;
 ‘Tell me, my little one.’
 ‘Oh I thought that there the flowers
 never fade,
 That there never sets the sun.’

‘And wouldst thou love to go thither,
 my child,
 Thither wouldst thou love to go,

And leave the pretty flowers that
wither,
And the sun that sets below?’

‘Oh I would be glad to go there,
mother,
To go and live there now ;
And I would pray for thy coming,
mother ;—

My mother, wouldst not thou?’

10 January 1846.

MARY MAGDALENE

SHE came in deep repentance,
And knelt down at His feet
Who can change the sorrow into joy,
The bitter into sweet.

She had cast away her jewels
And her rich attire,
And her breast was filled with a holy
shame,
And her heart with a holy fire.

Her tears were more precious
Than her precious pearls—
Her tears that fell upon His feet
As she wiped them with her curls.

Her youth and her beauty
Were budding to their prime ;
But she wept for the great trans-
gression,
The sin of other time.

Trembling betwixt hope and fear,
She sought the King of Heaven,
Forsook the evil of her ways,
Loved much, and was forgiven.

8 February 1846.

ON THE DEATH OF A CAT

A FRIEND OF MINE AGED TEN
YEARS AND A HALF

WHO shall tell the lady's grief
When her Cat was past relief?
Who shall number the hot tears
Shed o'er her, belov'd for years?
Who shall say the dark dismay
Which her dying caused that day?

Come, ye Muses, one and all,
Come obedient to my call ;
Come and mourn with tuneful breath
Each one for a separate death ;
And, while you in numbers sigh,
I will sing her elegy.

Of a noble race she came,
And Grimalkin was her name.
Young and old full many a mouse
Felt the prowess of her house ;
Weak and strong full many a rat
Cowered beneath her crushing pat ;
And the birds around the place
Shrank from her too close embrace.
But one night, reft of her strength,
She lay down and died at length :
Lay a kitten by her side
In whose life the mother died.
Spare her line and lineage,
Guard her kitten's tender age,
And that kitten's name as wide
Shall be known as hers that died.
And whoever passes by
The poor grave where Puss doth
lie,
Softly, softly let him tread,
Nor disturb her narrow bed.

14 March 1846.

TO ELIZABETH READ

WITH SOME POSTAGE-STAMPS FOR
A COLLECTION

SWEETEST Elizabeth, accept, I pray,
These lowly stamps I send in
homage true :
One hundred humble servants in
their way
Are not to be despised, though
poor to view.
Their livery of red and black—nor
gay
Nor sober all—is typical of you,
In whom are gravity and gladness
mixt :
Thought here, smiles there—per-
fection lies betwixt.

17 March 1846.

LOVE ATTACKED

LOVE is more sweet than flowers,
But sooner dying ;
Warmer than sunny hours,
But faster flying ;

Softer than music whispers,
Springing with day,
To murmur till the vespers,
Then die away ;

More kind than friendship's greeting,
But as untrue ;
Brighter than hope, but fleeting
More swiftly too.

Like breath of summer breezes
Gently it sighs,
But soon alas one ceases,
The other dies :

And like an inundation
It leaves behind
An utter desolation
Of heart and mind.

Who then would court Love's
presence,
If here below
It can but be the essence
Of restless woe ?

Returned or unrequited,
'Tis still the same ;
The flame was never lighted,
Or sinks the flame.

Yet all, both fools and sages,
Have felt its power,
In distant lands and ages,—
Here, at this hour.

Then what from fear and weeping
Shall give me rest ?
Oh tell me, ye who sleeping
At length are blest !

In answer to my crying,
Sounds like incense
Rose from the earth, replying,
'Indifference.'

21 April 1846.

LOVE DEFENDED

WHO extols a wilderness ?
Who hath praised indifference ?
Foolish one, thy words are sweet,
But devoid of sense.

As the man who ne'er hath seen,
Or as he who cannot hear,
Is the heart that hath no part
In Love's hope and fear.

True, the blind do not perceive
The unsightly things around ;
True, the deaf man trembleth not
At an awful sound.

But the face of heaven and earth,
And the murmur of the main,
Surely are a recompense
For a little pain.

So, though Love may not be free
Always from a taint of grief,
If its sting is very sharp,
Great is its relief.

23 April 1846.

THE MARTYR

SEE, the sun hath risen—
Lead her from the prison ;
She is young and tender,—lead her
tenderly :
May no fear subdue her,
Lest the saints be fewer—
Lest her place in heaven be lost
eternally.

Forth she came, not trem-
bling,
No nor yet dissembling
An o'erwhelming terror weighing her
down, down ;
Little, little heeding
Earth, but inly pleading
For the strength to triumph and to
win a crown.

All her might was rallied
To her heart ; not pallid
Was her cheek, but glowing with a
glorious red ;
Glorious red and saintly,
Never paling faintly,
But still flushing, kindling still, with-
out thought of dread.

On she went, on faster,
Trusting in her Master,
Feeling that His eye watched o'er
her lovingly ;
He would prove and try her,
But would not deny her
When her soul had past, for His
sake, patiently.

'Christ,' she said, 'receive
me,—
Let no terrors grieve me,—
Take my soul and guard it with Thy
heavenly cares :
Take my soul and guard it,—
Take it and reward it
With the love Thou bearest for the
love it bears.'

Quickened with a fire
Of sublime desire,
She looked up to heaven, and she
cried aloud :
'Death, I do entreat thee,
Come ! I go to meet thee ;
Wrap me in the whiteness of a virgin
shroud.'

On she went, hope-laden—
Happy, happy maiden !
Never more to tremble, and to weep
no more :
All her sins forgiven,
Straight the path to heaven,
Through the glowing fire, lay her
feet before.

On she went, on quickly,
And her breath came thickly,
With the longing to see God coming
pantingly :
Now the fire is kindled,
And her flesh has dwindled
Unto dust ;—her soul is mounting up
on high :

Higher, higher mounting,
 The swift moments counting,—
 Fear is left beneath her, and the
 chastening rod :
 Tears no more shall blind
 her ;
 Trouble lies behind her ;
 Satisfied with hopeful rest, and replete
 with God.

24 May 1846.

THE DYING MAN TO HIS BETROTHED

ONE word—'tis all I ask of thee ;
 One word—and that is little now
 That I have learned thy wrong of me ;
 And thou too art unfaithful—thou !
 O thou sweet poison, sweetest death,
 O honey between serpent's teeth,
 Breathe on me with thy scorching
 breath !

The last poor hope is fleeting now,
 And with it life is ebbing fast ;
 I gaze upon thy cold white brow,
 And loathe and love thee to the
 last.
 And still thou keepest silence,—still
 Thou look'st on me : for good or ill
 Speak out, that I may know thy will.

Thou weepest, woman, and art pale :
 Weep not, for thou shalt soon be
 free ;
 My life is ending like a tale
 That was but never more shall be.
 O blessed moments, ye fleet fast,
 And soon the latest shall be past,
 And she will be content at last.

Nay, tremble not, I have not curst
 Thy house or mine, or thee or me.
 The moment that I saw thee first,
 The moment that I first loved
 thee,—
 Curse *them* ?—Alas I can but bless
 In this mine hour of heaviness :—
 Nay, sob not so in thy distress.

I have been harsh, thou say'st of me ;—
 God knows my heart was never so ;
 It never could be so to thee.
 And now it is too late—I know
 Thy grief—forgive me, love, 'tis o'er ;
 For I shall never trouble more
 Thy life that was so calm before.

I pardon thee ; mayst thou be blest !
 Say, wilt thou sometimes think of
 me ?
 Oh may I, from my happy rest,
 Still look with love on thine and
 thee,—
 And may I pray for thee alway,
 And for thy love still may I pray,
 Waiting the everlasting day !

Stoop over me ;—ah this is death !
 I scarce can see thee at my side :
 Stoop lower ; let me feel thy breath,
 O thou, mine own, my promised
 bride !
 Pardon me, love ;—I pardon thee :
 And may our pardon sealèd be
 Throughout the long eternity.

The pains of death my senses cover
 Oh for His sake who died for men,
 Be thou more true to this thy lover
 Than thou hast been to me :
 Amen.
 And, if he chide thee wrongfully,
 One little moment think on me,
 And thou wilt bear it patiently.

And now, O God, I turn to Thee :
 Thou only, Father, canst not fail :
 Lord, Thou hast tried and broken
 me,

And yet Thy mercy shall prevail.
 Saviour, through Thee I am for-
 given ;—

Do Thou receive my soul, blood-
 shriven,

O Christ, who art the Gate of
 Heaven !

14 July 1846.

LISSETTA ALL' AMANTE

PERDONA al primo eccesso
 D' un tenero dolore ;

A te promisi il core,
 E vo' serbarlo a te.

Ma dimmi e mi consola :
 M' ami tu ancor, cor mio ?
 Se a te fedel son io,
 Sarai fedele a me ?

Chè se nell' alma ingrata
 Pensi ad abbandonarmi,
 Anch' io saprò scordarmi
 D' un amator crudel.

Ma crederlo non voglio,
 Ma non lo vo' pensare ;
 Chè nol potrei lasciare,
 Chè gli sarei fedel.

Folkestone, 11 August 1846.

THE DEAD BRIDE

THERE she lay so still and pale,
 With her bridal robes around her :
 Joy is fleeting, life is frail,
 Death had found her.

Gone for ever : gone away
 From the love and light of earth ;
 Gone for ever : who shall say
 Where her second birth ?

Had her life been good and kind ?
 Had her heart been meek and
 pure ?

Was she of a lowly mind,
 Ready to endure ?

Did she still console the sad,
 Soothe the widow's anguish wild,
 Make the poor and needy glad,
 Tend the orphan child ?

Who shall say what hope and fear
 Crowded in her short life's span ?
 If the love of God was dear,
 Or the love of man ?

Happy bride if single-hearted
 Her first love to God was given ;
 If from this world she departed
 But to dwell in heaven ;

If her faith on heaven was fixed
 And her hope ; if charity
 Filled her full of light unmixed
 With earth's vanity.

But alas, if tainted pleasure
 Won her heart and held it here,
 Where is now her failing treasure,
 All her gladness where ? . . .

Hush, too curious questioner ;
 Hush, and think thine own sins
 o'er.
 Little canst thou learn from her ;
 For we know no more

Than that there she lies all pale
 With her bridal robes around her :
 Joy is fleeting—life is frail—
 Death hath found her.
 Folkestone, 10 September 1846.

WILL THESE HANDS NE'ER BE CLEAN?

AND who is this lies prostrate at thy
 feet ?

And is he dead, thou man of wrath
 and pride ?

Yes, now thy vengeance is complete,
 Thy hate is satisfied.

What had he done to merit this of
 thee ?

Who gave thee power to take away
 his life ?

O deeply-rooted direful enmity

That ended in long strife !

See where he grasped thy mantle as
 he fell,

Staining it with his blood ; how
 terrible

Must be the payment due for this in
 hell !

And dost thou think to go and see
 no more

Thy bleeding victim, now the
 struggle's o'er ?

To find out peace in other lands,
 And wash the red mark from thy
 hands ?

It shall not be ; for everywhere
 He shall be with thee ; and the air
 Shall smell of blood, and on the
 wind

His groans pursue thee close
 behind.

When waking he shall stand before
 thee ;

And when at length sleep shall
 come o'er thee,

Powerless to move, alive to dream,
 So dreadful shall thy visions seem
 That thou shalt own them even
 to be

More hateful than reality.

What time thou stoopest down to
 drink

Of limpid waters, thou shalt think
 It is thy foe's blood bubbles up
 From the polluted fountain's cup,
 That stains thy lip, that cries to
 heaven

For vengeance—and it shall be
 given.

And when thy friends shall question
 thee,

'Why art thou changed so
 heavily ?'

Trembling and fearful shalt thou
 say

'I am not changed,' and turn
 away ;

For such an outcast thou shalt be
 Thou wilt not dare ask sympathy.

And so thy life will pass, and day
 by day

The current of existence flow away ;
 And, though to thee earth shall be
 hell and breath

Vengeance, yet thou shalt tremble
 more at death.

And one by one thy friends will
 learn to fear thee,

And thou shalt live without a hope
 to cheer thee ;

Lonely amid a thousand, chained
 though free,

The curse of memory shall cling to
 thee :

Ages may pass away, worlds rise
and set—

But thou shalt not forget.

Folkestone, 16 September 1846.

GONE FOR EVER

O HAPPY rosebud blooming
Upon thy parent tree,
Nay, thou art too presuming ;
For soon the earth entombing
Thy faded charms shall be,
And the chill damp consuming.

O happy skylark springing
Up to the broad blue sky,
Too fearless in thy winging,
Too gladsome in thy singing,
Thou also soon shalt lie
Where no sweet notes are ringing.

And through life's shine and shower
We shall have joy and pain :
But in the summer bower
And at the morning hour
We still shall look in vain
For the same bird and flower.
14 October 1846.

PRESENT AND FUTURE

WHAT is life that we should love it,
Cherishing it evermore,
Never prizing aught above it,
Ever loth to give it o'er ?
Is it goodness ? is it gladness ?
Nay, 'tis more of sin and sadness ;
Nay, of weariness 'tis more.

Earthly joys are very fleeting,
Earthly sorrows very long ;
Parting ever follows meeting,
Night succeeds to evensong.

Storms may darken in the morning
And eclipse the sun's bright dawning,
And the chilly gloom prolong.

But, though clouds may screen and
hide it,

The sun shines for evermore.
Then bear grief in hope : abide it,
Knowing that it must give o'er :
And the darkness shall flee from us,
And the sun beam down upon us
Ever glowing more and more.

5 November 1846.

THE TIME OF WAITING

LIFE is fleeting, joy is fleeting,
Coldness follows love and greeting,
Parting still succeeds to meeting.

If I say ' Rejoice to-day,'
Sorrow meets me in the way :
I cannot my will obey.

If I say ' My grief shall cease ;
Now then I will live in peace ' :
My cares instantly increase.

When I look up to the sky,
Thinking to see light on high,
Clouds my searching glance defy.

When I look upon the earth
For the flowers that should have
birth,
I find dreariness and dearth.

And the winds sigh on for ever,
Murmurs still the flowing river,
On the graves the sunbeams quiver.

And destruction waxeth bold,
And the earth is growing old,
And I tremble in the cold.

And my weariness increases
To an ache that never ceases
And a pain that ne'er decreases.

And the times are turbulent,
And the Holy Church is rent,
And who tremble or repent?

And loud cries do ever rise
To the portals of the skies
From our earthly miseries;

From love slighted, not requited;
From high hope that should have
lighted
All our path up, now benighted;

From the woes of humankind;
From the darkness of the mind;
From all anguish undefined;

From the heart that's crushed and
sinking;
From the brain grown blank with
thinking;
From the spirit sorrow drinking.

All cry out with pleading strong:
'Vengeance, Lord! how long, how
long
Shall we suffer this great wrong?'

And the pleading and the cry
Of earth's sons are heard on high,
And are noted verily.

When this world shall be no more,
The oppressors shall endure
The great vengeance which is sure.

And the sinful shall remain
To an endless death and pain;
But the good shall live again,—

Never more to be oppressed;
Balm shall heal the bleeding breast,
And the weary be at rest.

All shall vanish of dejection,
Grief and fear and imperfection,
In that glorious resurrection.

Heed not then a night of sorrow,
If the dawning of the morrow
From past grief fresh beams shall
borrow.

Thankful for whate'er is given,
Strive we, as we ne'er have striven,
For love's sake to be forgiven.

Then, the dark clouds opening,
Even to us the sun shall bring
Gladness, and sweet flowers shall
spring.

For Christ's guiding love alway,
For the everlasting day,
For meek patience, let us pray.

16 November 1846.

TASSO AND LEONORA

A GLORIOUS vision hovers o'er his
soul,
Gilding the prison and the weary
bed,—

Though hard the pillow placed
beneath his head,
Though brackish be the water in the
bowl

Beside him; he can see the planets
roll

In glowing adoration, without
dread;

Knowing how, by unerring wisdom
led,

They struggle not against the strong
control.

When suddenly a star shoots from
the skies,
Than all the other stars more
purely bright,
Replete with heavenly loves and
harmonies.

He starts :—what meets his full
awakening sight ?
Lo ! Leonora, with large humid eyes,
Gazing upon him in the misty light.
19 December 1846.

LOVE

LOVE is all happiness, love is all
beauty,
Love is the crown of flaxen heads
and hoary ;
Love is the only everlasting duty ;
And love is chronicled in endless
story,
And kindles endless glory.
24 February 1847.

THE SOLITARY ROSE

O HAPPY rose, red rose, that bloom-
est lonely
Where there are none to gather
while they love thee ;
That art perfumed by thine own
fragrance only,
Resting like incense round thee
and above thee ;—
Thou hearest nought save some pure
stream that flows,
O happy rose.
What though for thee no nightin-
gales are singing ?
They chant one eve, but hush them
in the morning.
Near thee no little moths and bees
are winging

R

To steal thy honey when the day
is dawning ;—
Thou keep'st thy sweetness till the
twilight's close,
O happy rose.

Then rest in peace, thou lone and
lovely flower ;
Yea be thou glad, knowing that
none are near thee,
To mar thy beauty in a wanton hour,
And scatter all thy leaves nor deign
to wear thee.
Securely in thy solitude repose,
O happy rose.
15 March 1847.

THE SONG OF THE STAR

I AM a Star dwelling on high
In the azure of the vaulted sky.
I shine on the land and I shine on
the sea,
And the little breezes talk to me.
The waves rise towards me every one,
And forget the brightness of the sun ;
The growing grass springs up to-
wards me,
And forgets the day's fertility.
My face is light, and my beam is life,
And my passionless being hath no
strife.
In me no love is turned to hate,
No fullness is made desolate ;
Here is no hope, no fear, no grief,
Here is no pain and no relief ;
Nor birth nor death hath part in me,
But a profound tranquillity.
The blossoms that bloomed yesterday
Unaltered shall bloom on to-day,
And on the morrow shall not fade.
Within the everlasting shade
The fountain gushing up for ever
Flows on to the eternal river,

H

That, running by a reedy shore,
 Bubbles, bubbles evermore.
 The happy birds sing in the trees
 To the music of the southern breeze ;
 And they fear no lack of food,
 Chirping in the underwood ;
 For ripe seeds and berried bushes
 Serve the finches and the thrushes,
 And all feathered fowls that dwell
 In that shade majestic.
 Beyond all clouds and all mistiness
 I float in the strength of my loveliness.

And I move round the sun with a
 measured motion
 In the blue expanse of the skyey
 ocean ;
 And I hear the song of the angel
 throug

In a river of ecstasy flow along,
 Without a pausing, without a hushing,
 Like an everlasting fountain's gush-
 ing

That of its own will bubbles up
 From a white untainted cup.
 Countless planets float round me,
 Differing all in majesty ;
 Smaller some, and some more great,
 Amethystine, roseate,
 Golden, silvery, glowing blue,
 Hueless, and of every hue.
 Each and all, both great and small,
 With a cadence musical,
 Shoot out rays of glowing praise
 Never ending, but always
 Hymning the Creator's might
 Who hath filled them full of light ;
 Pealing through eternity,
 Filling out immensity ;
 Sun and moon and stars together
 In heights where is no cloudy weather ;
 Where is nor storm nor mist nor
 rain,

Where night goeth not to come again.

On and on and on for ever,
 Never ceasing, sinking never,
 Voiceless adorations rise
 To the heaven above the skies.
 We all chant with a holy harmony,
 No discord marreth our melody ;
 Here are no strifes nor envyings,
 But each with love joyously sings,
 For ever and ever floating free
 In the azure light of infinity.

19 March 1847.

RESURRECTION EVE

HE resteth : weep not ;
 The living sleep not
 With so much calm.

He hears no chiding
 And no deriding,
 Hath joy for sorrow,
 For night hath morrow,
 For wounds hath balm,
 For life's strange riot
 Hath death and quiet.
 Who would recall him

Of those that love him ?
 No fears appall him,
 No ills befall him ;

There's nought above him
 Save turf and flowers

And pleasant grass.
 Pass the swift hours,

How swiftly pass !
 The hours of slumber
 He doth not number ;
 Grey hours of morning
 Ere the day's dawning ;
 Brightened by gleams
 Of the sunbeams,—

By the foreseeing
 Of resurrection,
 Of glorious being,
 Of full perfection,

Of sins forgiven
 Before the face
 Of men and spirits ;
 Of God in heaven,
 The resting-place
 That he inherits.

8 April 1847.

THE DEAD CITY

ONCE I rambled in a wood
 With a careless hardihood,
 Heeding not the tangled way ;
 Labyrinths around me lay,
 But for them I never stood.

On, still on, I wandered on,
 And the sun above me shone ;
 And the birds around me winging
 With their everlasting singing
 Made me feel not quite alone.

In the branches of the trees
 Murmured like the hum of bees
 The low sound of happy breezes,
 Whose sweet voice that never
 ceases
 Lulls the heart to perfect ease.

Streamlets bubbled all around
 On the green and fertile ground,
 Through the rushes and the grass,
 Like a sheet of liquid glass,
 With a soft and trickling sound.

And I went, I went on faster,
 Contemplating no disaster ;
 And I plucked ripe blackberries,
 But the birds with envious eyes
 Came and stole them from their
 master.

For the birds here were all tame ;
 Some with bodies like a flame ;
 Some that glanced the branches
 through,
 Pure and colourless as dew ;
 Fearlessly to me they came.

Before me no mortal stood
 In the mazes of that wood ;
 Before me the birds had never
 Seen a man, but dwelt for ever
 In a happy solitude :

Happy solitude, and blest
 With beatitude of rest ;
 Where the woods are ever vernal,
 And the life and joy eternal,
 Without death's or sorrow's test.

O most blessed solitude !
 O most full beatitude !
 Where are quiet without strife
 And imperishable life,
 Nothing marred and all things good.

And the bright sun, life-begetting,
 Never rising, never setting,
 Shining warmly overhead,
 Nor too pallid nor too red,
 Lulled me to a sweet forgetting—

Sweet forgetting of the time ;
 And I listened for no chime
 Which might warn me to be
 gone ;
 But I wandered on, still on,
 'Neath the boughs of oak and lime.

Know I not how long I strayed
 In the pleasant leafy shade ;
 But the trees had gradually
 Grown more rare, the air more
 free,
 The sun hotter overhead.

Soon the birds no more were seen
 Glancing through the living green,
 And a blight had passed upon
 All the trees, and the pale sun
 Shone with a strange lurid sheen.

Then a darkness spread around :
 I saw nought ; I heard no sound :
 Solid darkness overhead,
 With a trembling cautious tread
 Passed I o'er the unseen ground.

But at length a pallid light
 Broke upon my searching sight ;
 A pale solitary ray
 Like a star at dawn of day
 Ere the sun is hot and bright.

Towards its faintly glimmering beam
 I went on as in a dream—
 A strange dream of hope and
 fear—
 And I saw, as I drew near,
 'Twas in truth no planet's gleam ;

But a lamp above a gate
 Shone in solitary state,
 O'er a desert drear and cold,
 O'er a heap of ruins old,
 O'er a scene most desolate.

By that gate I entered lone
 A fair city of white stone ;
 And a lovely light to see
 Dawned, and spread most gradu-
 ally,
 Till the air grew warm and shone.

Through the splendid streets I strayed
 In that radiance without shade ;
 Yet I heard no human sound ;
 All was still and silent round
 As a city of the dead.

All the doors were open wide ;
 Lattices on every side
 In the wind swung to and fro—
 Wind that whispered very low,
 'Go and see the end of pride.'

With a fixed determination
 Entered I each habitation ;
 But they all were tenantless.
 All was utter loneliness,
 All was deathless desolation.

In the noiseless market-place
 Was no careworn busy face ;
 There were none to buy or sell,
 None to listen or to tell,
 In this silent emptiness.

Through the city on I went
 Full of awe and wonderment.
 Still the light around me shone,
 And I wandered on, still on,
 In my great astonishment.

Till at length I reached a place
 Where amid an ample space
 Rose a palace for a king ;
 Golden was the turreting,
 And of solid gold the base.

The great porch was ivory,
 And the steps were ebony ;
 Diamond and chrysoprase
 Set the pillars in a blaze,
 Capitalled with jewelry.

None was there to bar my way,
 And the breezes seemed to say,
 'Touch not these, but pass them
 by,
 Pressing onwards' ; therefore I
 Entered in and made no stay.

All around was desolate.
 I went on ; a silent state
 Reigned in each deserted room,
 And I hastened through the gloom
 Till I reached an outer gate.

Soon a shady avenue,
 Blossom-perfumed, met my view ;
 Here and there the sunbeams fell
 On pure founts whose sudden
 swell
 Up from marble basons flew.

Every tree was fresh and green ;
 Not a withered leaf was seen
 Through the veil of flowers and
 fruit ;
 Strong and sapful were the root,
 The top boughs, and all between.

Vines were climbing everywhere
 Full of purple grapes and fair ;
 And far off I saw the corn
 With its heavy head down borne
 By the odour-laden air.

Who shall strip the bending vine ?
 Who shall tread the press for wine ?
 Who shall bring the harvest in
 When the pallid ears begin
 In the sun to glow and shine ?

On I went alone, alone,
 Till I saw a tent that shone
 With each bright and lustrous
 hue ;
 It was trimmed with jewels too,
 And with flowers ; not one was gone.

Then the breezes whispered me :
 'Enter in, and look, and see
 How for luxury and pride
 A great multitude have died.'
 And I entered tremblingly.

Lo a splendid banquet laid
 In the cool and pleasant shade.
 Mighty tables everything
 Of sweet Nature's furnishing
 That was rich and rare displayed ;

And each strange and luscious cate
 Practised art makes delicate ;
 With a thousand fair devices
 Full of odours and of spices ;
 And a warm voluptuous state.

All the vessels were of gold,
 Set with gems of worth untold.
 In the midst a fountain rose
 Of pure milk, whose rippling
 flows
 In a silver bason rolled.

In green emerald baskets were
 Sun-red apples, streaked and fair ;
 Here the nectarine and peach
 And ripe plum lay, and on
 each
 The bloom rested everywhere.

Grapes were hanging overhead,
 Purple, pale, and ruby-red ;
 And in panniers all around
 Yellow melons shone, fresh found,
 With the dew upon them spread.

And the apricot and pear
 And the pulpy fig were there,
 Cherries and dark mulberries,
 Bunchy currants, strawberries,
 And the lemon wan and fair :

And unnumbered others too,
 Fruits of every size and hue,
 Juicy in their ripe perfection,
 Cool beneath the cool reflection
 Of the curtains' skyey blue.

All the floor was strewn with flowers
 Fresh from sunshine and from
 showers,
 Roses, lilies, jessamine ;
 And the ivy ran between,
 Like a thought in happy hours.

And this feast too lacked no guest
 With its warm delicious rest ;
 With its couches softly sinking,
 And its glow not made for thinking,
 But for careless joy at best.

Many banqueters were there,
 Wrinkled age, the young, the fair ;
 In the splendid revelry
 Flushing cheek and kindling eye
 Told of gladness without care.

Yet no laughter rang around,
 Yet they uttered forth no sound ;
 With the smile upon his face
 Each sat moveless in his place,
 Silently, as if spellbound.

The low whispering voice was gone,
 And I felt awed and alone.
 In my great astonishment
 To the feasters up I went—
 Lo they all were turned to stone !

Yea they all were statue-cold,
 Men and women, young and old ;
 With the life-like look and smile
 And the flush ; and all the while
 The hard fingers kept their hold.

Here a little child was sitting
 With a merry glance, befitting
 Happy age and heedless heart ;
 There a young man sat apart,
 With a forward look unweeting.

Nigh them was a maiden fair,
 And the ringlets of her hair
 Round her slender fingers twined ;
 And she blushed as she reclined,
 Knowing that her love was there.

Here a dead man sat to sup,
 In his hand a drinking-cup ;
 Wine-cup of the heavy gold,
 Human hand stony and cold,
 And no life-breath struggling up.

There a mother lay and smiled
 Down upon her infant child ;
 Happy child and happy mother,
 Laughing back to one another
 With a gladness undefiled.

Here an old man slept, worn out
 With the revelry and rout ;
 Here a strong man sat and gazed
 On a girl whose eyes upraised
 No more wandered roundabout.

And none broke the stillness—none ;
 I was the sole living one.
 And methought that silently
 Many seemed to look on me
 With strange steadfast eyes that
 shone.

Full of fear I would have fled ;
 Full of fear I bent my head,
 Shutting out each stony guest—
 When I looked again, the feast
 And the tent had vanished.

Yes, once more I stood alone
 Where the happy sunlight shone,
 And a gentle wind was sighing,
 And the little birds were flying,
 And the dreariness was gone.

All these things that I have said
Awed me and made me afraid.

What was I that I should see
So much hidden mystery?
And I straightway knelt and prayed.

9 April 1847.

THE ROSE

O ROSE, thou flower of flowers, thou
fragrant wonder,
Who shall describe thee in thy
ruddy prime,
Thy perfect fullness in the summer-
time,

When the pale leaves blushing
part asunder
And show the warm red heart lies
glowing under?

Thou shouldst bloom surely in
some sunny clime,
Untouched by blights and chilly
winter's rime,

Where lightnings never flash nor
peals the thunder.

And yet in happier spheres they
cannot need thee

So much as we do with our weight
of woe;

Perhaps they would not tend, perhaps
not heed thee,

And thou wouldst lonely and
neglected grow:

And He who is all wise, He hath
decreed thee

To gladden earth and cheer all
hearts below.

17 April 1847.

SPRING QUIET

GONE were but the Winter,
Come were but the Spring,
I would go to a covert
Where the birds sing;

Where in the whitethorn
Singeth a thrush,
And a robin sings
In the holly-bush.

Full of fresh scents
Are the budding boughs
Arching high over
A cool green house;

Full of sweet scents,
And whispering air
Which sayeth softly:
'We spread no snare;

'Here dwell in safety,
Here dwell alone,
With a clear stream
And a mossy stone.

'Here the sun shineth
Most shadily;
Here is heard an echo
Of the far sea,
Though far off it be.'

Towards May 1847.

I HAVE FOUGHT A GOOD FIGHT

'WHO art thou that comest with a
steadfast face
Through the hushed arena to the
burying-place?'

'I am one whose footprints marked
upon the sand
Cry in blood for vengeance on a
guilty land.'

'How are these thy garments white
as whitest snow
Though thy blood hath touched them
in its overflow?'

'My blood cannot stain them, nor
my tears make white ;
One than I more mighty, He hath
made them bright.'

'Say, do thy wounds pain thee open
every one,
Wounds that now are glowing clearer
than the sun ?'

'Nay, they are my gladness un-
alloyed by grief ;
Like a desert-fountain, or a long
relief.'

'When the lion had thee in his
deadly clasp,
Was there then no terror in thy
stified gasp ?'

'Though I felt the crushing, and
the grinding teeth,
He was with me ever, He who
comforteth.'

'Didst thou hear the shouting, as
of a great flood,
Crying out for vengeance, crying out
for blood ?'

'I heard it in silence, and was not
afraid,
While for the mad people silently I
prayed.'

'Did their hate not move thee ? art
thou heedless then
Of the fear of children and the curse
of men ?'

'God looked down upon me from
the heaven above,
And I did not tremble, happy in
His love.'

July 1847.

WISHES

OH would that I were very far away
Among the lanes, with hedges all
around,

Happily listening to the dreamy
sound

Of distant sheep-bells, smelling the
new hay

And all the wild flowers scattered
in my way :

Or would that I were lying on
some mound

Where shade and butterflies and
thyme abound,

Beneath the trees, upon a sunny day :
Or would I strolled beside the mighty
sea—

The sea before, and the tall cliffs
behind ;

While winds from the warm south
might tell to me

How health and joy for all men
are designed :—

But, be I where I may, would I had
thee,

And heard thy gentle voice, my
Mother kind.

22 July 1847.

THE DREAM

REST, rest ; the troubled breast
Panteth evermore for rest :—

Be it sleep or be it death,
Rest is all it coveteth.

Tell me, dost thou remember the
old time

We sat together by that sunny
stream,

And dreamed our happiness was
too sublime

Only to be a dream ?

Gazing, till steadfast gazing made us
blind,
We watched the fishes leaping
at their play ;
Thinking our love too tender and
too kind
Ever to pass away.

And some of all our thoughts were
true at least
What time we thought together
by that stream ;
Thy happiness has evermore in-
creased,—
My love was not a dream.

And, now that thou art gone, I often
sit
On its green margin, for thou
once wert there ;
And see the clouds that, floating
over it,
Darken the quiet air.

Yes oftentimes I sit beside it now,
Harkening the wavelets ripple
o'er the sands ;
Until again I hear thy whispered vow
And feel thy pressing hands.

Then the bright sun seems to stand
still in heaven,
The stream sings gladly as it
onward flows,
The rushes grow more green, the
grass more even,
Blossoms the budding rose.

I say : 'It is a joy-dream ; I will
take it ;
He is not gone—he will return
to me.'
What found'st thou in my heart that
thou shouldst break it?—
How have I injured thee ?

Oh I am weary of life's passing show,
Its pageant and its pain.
I would I could lie down lone in my
woe,
Ne'er to rise up again ;
I would I could lie down where none
might know ;
For truly love is vain.

Truly love's vain ; but oh how vainer
still
Is that which is not love, but
seems !
Concealed indifference, a covered ill,
A very dream of dreams.

1847.

ELEANOR

CHERRY-RED her mouth was,
Morning-blue her eye,
Lady-slim her little waist
Rounded prettily ;
And her sweet smile of gladness
Made every heart rejoice :
But sweeter even than her smile
The tones were of her voice.

Sometimes she spoke, sometimes she
sang ;
And evermore the sound
Floated, a dreamy melody,
Upon the air around ;
As though a wind were singing
Far up beside the sun,
Till sound and warmth and glory
Were blended all in one.

Her hair was long and golden,
And clustered unconfined
Over a forehead high and white
That spoke a noble mind.
Her little hand, her little foot,
Were ready evermore
To hurry forth to meet a friend ;
She smiling at the door.

But if she sang or if she spoke,
 'Twas music soft and grand,
 As though a distant singing sea
 Broke on a tuneful strand ;
 As though a blessed Angel
 Were singing a glad song,
 Halfway between the earth and heaven
 Joyfully borne along.

30 July 1847.

ISIDORA

LOVE, whom I have loved too well,
 Turn thy face away from me ;
 For I heed nor heaven nor hell
 While mine eyes can look on thee.
 Do not answer, do not speak,
 For thy voice can make me weak.

I must choose 'twixt God and man,
 And I dare not hesitate :
 Oh how little is life's span,
 And Eternity how great !
 Go out from me ; for I fear
 Mine own strength while thou art
 here.

Husband, leave me ; but know this :
 I would gladly give my soul
 So that thine might dwell in bliss
 Free from the accurst control,
 So that thou mightest go hence
 In a hopeful penitence.

Yea from hell I would look up,
 And behold thee in thy place,
 Drinking of the living cup,
 With the joy-look on thy face,
 And the light that shines alone
 From the glory of the Throne.

But how could my endless loss
 Be thine everlasting gain ?
 Shall thy palm grow from my cross ?
 Shall thine ease be in my pain ?

Yea thine own soul witnesseth
 Thy life is not in my death.

It were vain that I should die—
 That we thus should perish both ;
 Thou wouldst gain no peace thereby ;
 And in truth I should be loth
 By the loss of my salvation
 To increase thy condemnation.

Little infant, his and mine,
 Would that I were as thou art ;
 Nothing breaks that sleep of thine,
 And ah nothing breaks thy heart ;
 And thou knowest naught of strife,
 The heart's death for the soul's life.

None misdoubt thee, none misdeem
 Of thy wishes and thy will.
 All thy thoughts are what they seem,
 Very pure and very still ;
 And thou fearest not the voice
 That once made thy heart rejoice.

Oh how calm thou art, my child !
 I could almost envy thee.
 Thou has neither wept nor smiled,
 Thou that sleepest quietly.
 Would I also were at rest
 With the one that I love best.

Husband, go. I dare not hearken
 To thy words or look upon
 Those despairing eyes that darken
 Down on me—But he is gone !
 Nay, come back, and be my fate
 As thou wilt !—It is too late.

I have conquered ; it is done,
 Yea the death-struggle is o'er,
 And the hopeless quiet won :—
 I shall see his face no more :—
 And mine eyes are waxing dim
 Now they cannot look on him.

And my heart-pulses are growing
 Very weak, and through my whole
 Life-blood a slow chill is going :—
 Blessed Saviour, take my soul
 To Thy Paradise and care :—
 Paradise, will he be there ?
9 August 1847.

ZARA

Now the pain beginneth and the
 word is spoken ;—

Hark unto the tolling of the church-
 yard chime !—

Once my heart was gladsome, now
 my heart is broken,—

Once my love was noble, now it
 is a crime.

But the fear is over ; yea what now
 shall pain me ?

Arm thee in thy sorrow, O most
 desolate !

Weariness and weakness, these shall
 now sustain me,—

Pride and bitter grieving, burning
 love and hate.

Yea the fear is over, the strong fear
 and trembling ;

I can doubt no longer, he is gone
 indeed.

Rend thy hair, lost woman, weep
 without dissembling ;

The heart torn forth from it, shall
 the breast not bleed ?

Happy she who looketh on his
 beauty's glory !

Happy she who listeneth to his
 gentle word !

Yet, O happy maiden, sorrow lies
 before thee ;

Greeting hath been given, parting
 must be heard.

He shall leave thee also, he who now
 hath left me,

With a weary spirit and an aching
 heart ;

Thou shalt be bereaved by him who
 hath bereft me ;

Thou hast sucked the honey,—
 feel the stinging's smart.

Let the cold gaze on him, let the
 heartless hear him,

For he shall not hurt them, they
 are safe in sooth :

But let loving women shun that man
 and fear him,

Full of cruel kindness and devoid
 of ruth.

When ye call upon him, hope for no
 replying ;

When ye gaze upon him, think
 not he will look ;

Hope not for his pity when your
 heart is sighing ;

Such another, waiting, weeping,
 he forsook.

Hath the heaven no thunder where-
 with to denounce him ?

Hath the heaven no lightning
 wherewith to chastise ?

O my heart and spirit, O my soul,
 renounce him

Who hath called for vengeance
 from the distant skies :

Vengeance which pursues thee,
 vengeance which shall find thee,

Crushing thy false spirit, scathing
 thy fair limb :—

O ye thunders, deafen, O ye light-
 nings, blind me ;

Winds and storms from heaven,
 strike me but spare him !

I forgive thee, dearest, cruel, I forgive thee ;—
 May thy cup of sorrow be poured
 out for me ;
 Though the dregs be bitter, yet they
 shall not grieve me,
 Knowing that I drink them, O my
 love, for thee.
 1847.

THE NOVICE

I LOVE one and he loveth me :
 Who sayeth this ? who deemeth this ?
 And is this thought a cause of bliss,
 Or source of misery ?

The loved may die, or he may
 change :
 And if he die thou art bereft ;
 Or if he alter nought is left
 Save life that seemeth strange.

A weary life, a hopeless life,
 Full of all ill and fear-oppressed ;
 A weary life that looks for rest
 Alone after death's strife.

And love's joy hath no quiet even ;
 It evermore is variable.
 Its gladness is like war in hell
 More than repose in heaven.

Yea it is as a poison-cup
 That holds one quick fire-draught
 within ;
 For when the life seems to begin
 The slow death looketh up.

Then bring me to a solitude
 Where love may neither come nor go ;
 Where very peaceful waters flow,
 And roots are found for food ;

Where the wild honey-bee booms by,
 And trees and bushes freely give
 Ripe fruit and nuts : there I would
 live,
 And there I fain would die.

There autumn leaves may make my
 grave,
 And little birds sing over it ;
 And there cool twilight winds may
 flit
 And shadowy branches wave.
 4 September 1847.

IMMALEE

I GATHER thyme upon the sunny
 hills,
 And its pure fragrance ever glad-
 dens me,
 And in my mind having tran-
 quillity
 I smile to see how my green basket
 fills.
 And by clear streams I gather
 daffodils ;
 And in dim woods find out the
 cherry-tree,
 And take its fruit and the wild
 strawberry
 And nuts and honey ; and live free
 from ills.
 I dwell on the green earth, 'neath
 the blue sky,
 Birds are my friends, and leaves
 my rustling roof :
 The deer are not afraid of me, and I
 Hear the wild goat, and hail its
 hastening hoof ;
 The squirrels sit perked as I pass
 them by,
 And even the watchful hare stands
 not aloof.
 21 September 1847.

HEART'S CHILL BETWEEN

I DID not chide him, though I knew
 That he was false to me.
 Chide the exhaling of the dew,
 The ebbing of the sea,
 The fading of a rosy hue—
 But not inconstancy.

Why strive for love when love is
 o'er—
 Why bind a restive heart?
 He never knew the pain I bore
 In saying—'We must part,
 Let us be friends and nothing more':
 Oh woman's shallow art!

But it is over, it is done :
 I hardly heed it now :
 So many weary years have run
 Since then I think not how
 Things might have been—but greet
 each one
 With an unruffled brow.

What time I am where others be
 My heart seems very calm—
 Stone-calm : but, if all go from me,
 There comes a vague alarm,
 A shrinking in the memory
 From some forgotten harm.

And often through the long long
 night,
 Waking when none are near,
 I feel my heart beat fast with fright,
 Yet know not what I fear :
 Oh how I long to see the light,
 And the sweet birds to hear!

To have the sun upon my face,
 To look up through the trees,
 To walk forth in the open space
 And listen to the breeze,—

And not to dream the burial-place
 Is clogging my weak knees.

Sometimes I can nor weep nor pray,
 But am half stupefied ;
 And then all those who see me say
 Mine eyes are opened wide
 And that my wits seem gone
 astray :—
 Ah would that I had died !

Would I could die and be at peace—
 Or living could forget !
 My grief nor grows nor doth decrease,
 But ever is. And yet
 Methinks now that all this shall cease
 Before the sun shall set.

22 September 1847.

LADY ISABELLA

Heart warm as summer, fresh as
 spring,
 Gracious as autumn's harvesting,
 Pure as the winter's snows ; as white
 A hand as lilies in sunlight ;
 Eyes glorious as a midnight star ;
 Hair shining as the chestnuts are ;
 A step firm and majestic ;
 A voice singing and musical ;
 A soft expression, kind address ;
 Tears for another's heaviness ;
 Bright looks ; an action full of grace ;
 A perfect form, a perfect face ;
 All these become a woman well,
 And these had Lady Isabel.

27 September 1847.

NIGHT AND DEATH

NOW the sunlit hours are o'er,
 Rise up from thy shadowy shore,
 Happy Night, whom Chaos bore.

Better is the peaceful treasure
Of thy musings without measure
Than the day's unquiet pleasure.

Bring the holy moon ; so pale
She herself seems but a veil
For the sun, where no clouds sail.

Bring the stars, thy progeny ;
Each a little lamp on high
To light up an azure sky.

Sounds incomprehensible
In the shining planets dwell
Of thy sister Queen to tell.

Of that sister Nature saith
She hath power o'er life and breath ;
And her name is written Death.

She is fairer far than thou ;
Grief her head can never bow,
Joy is stamped upon her brow.

She is full of gentleness,
And of faith and hope ; distress
Finds in her forgetfulness.

In her arms who lieth down
Never more is seen to frown,
Though he wore a thorny crown.

Whoso sigheth in unrest,
If his head lean on her breast,
Witnesseth she is the best.

All the riches of the earth,
Weighed by her, are nothing worth :
She is the eternal birth.

In her treasure-house are found
Stored abundantly around
Almsdeeds done without a sound ;

Long forbearance ; patient will ;
Fortitude in midst of ill ;
Hope, when even fear grew still ;

Kindness given again for hate ;
Hearts resigned though desolate ;
Meekness, which is truly great ;

Bitter tears of penitence ;
Changeless love's omnipotence :—
And nought lacketh recompense.

In her house no tainted thing
Winneth any entering ;
There the poor have comforting.

There they wait a little time
Till the Angel-uttered chime
Sound the eternal matin-prime.

Then, upraised in joyfulness,
They shall know her, and confess
She is blessed and doth bless.

When earth's fleeting day is flown,
All created things shall own,
Death is Life, and Death alone.

28 September 1847.

DEATH'S CHILL BETWEEN

CHIDE not : let me breathe a little,
For I shall not mourn him long ;
Though the life-cord was so brittle,
The love-cord was very strong.
I would wake a little space
Till I find a sleeping-place.

You can go,—I shall not weep ;
You can go unto your rest.
My heart-ache is all too deep,
And too sore my throbbing breast.
Can sobs be, or angry tears,
Where are neither hopes nor fears ?

Though with you I am alone
 And must be so everywhere,
 I will make no useless moan,—
 None shall say, 'She could not
 bear.'

While life lasts I will be strong,—
 But I shall not struggle long.

Listen, listen!—Everywhere
 A low voice is calling me,
 And a step is on the stair,
 And one comes you do not see.
 Listen, listen!—Evermore
 A dim hand knocks at the door.

Hear me! He is come again,
 My own dearest is come back.
 Bring him in from the cold rain;
 Bring wine, and let nothing lack.
 Thou and I will rest together,
 Love, until the sunny weather.

I will shelter thee from harm,
 Hide thee from all heaviness.
 Come to me, and keep thee warm
 By my side in quietness.
 I will lull thee to thy sleep
 With sweet songs: we will not weep.

Who hath talked of weeping?—Yet
 There is something at my heart
 Gnawing, I would fain forget,
 And an aching and a smart.—
 Ah, my mother, 'tis in vain,
 For he is not come again.

29 September 1847.

THE LOTUS-EATERS

ULYSSES TO PENELOPE

In a far distant land they dwell,
 Incomprehensible,

Who love the shadow more than
 light,
 More than the sun the moon,
 Cool evening more than noon,
 Pale silver more than gold that
 glitters bright.
 A dark cloud overhangs their
 land

Like a mighty hand,
 Never moving from above it;
 A cool shade and moist and
 dim,
 With a twilight purple rim,
 And they love it.

And sometimes it giveth rain,
 But soon it ceaseth as before,
 And earth drieth up again,—
 Then the dews rise more and
 more,

Till it filleth, dropping o'er;
 But no forked lightnings flit,
 And no thunders roll in it.
 Through the land a river flows,
 With a sleepy sound it goes:

Such a drowsy noise, in sooth,
 Those who will not listen
 hear not:

But, if one is wakeful, fear
 not—

It shall lull him to repose,
 Bringing back the dreams of
 youth.

Hemlock groweth, poppy bloweth,
 In the fields where no man
 moweth:

And the vine is full of wine
 And are full of milk the kine,
 And the hares are all secure,
 And the birds are wild no more,
 And the forest-trees wax old,
 And winds stir, or hot or cold,—
 And yet no man taketh care,
 All things resting everywhere.

7 October 1847.

SONNET

FROM THE PSALMS

ALL through the livelong night I lay
 awake,
 Watering my couch with tears of
 heaviness.
 None stood beside me in my sore
 distress :—
 Then cried I to my heart : If thou
 wilt, break,
 But be thou still ; no moaning will
 I make,
 Nor ask man's help, nor kneel
 that he may bless.
 So I kept silence in my haughti-
 ness,
 Till lo the fire was kindled, and I
 spake—
 Saying : Oh that I had wings like
 to a dove,
 Then would I flee away and be at
 rest :
 I would not pray for friends or hope
 or love,
 But still the weary throbbing of
 my breast :
 And, gazing on the changeless
 heavens above,
 Witness that such a quietness is
 best.

7 November 1847.

SONG

THE stream moaneth as it floweth,
 The wind sigheth as it bloweth,
 Leaves are falling, Autumn goeth,
 Winter cometh back again ;
 And the air is very chilly,
 And the country rough and hilly,
 And I shiver in the rain.
 Who will help me ? who will love me ?

Heaven sets forth no light above me :
 Ancient memories reprove me,
 Long-forgotten feelings move me,
 I am full of heaviness.
 Earth is cold, too cold the sea :
 Whither shall I turn and flee ?
 Is there any hope for me ?
 Any ease for my heart-aching,
 Any sleep that hath no waking,
 Any night without day-breaking,
 Any rest from weariness ?

Hark the wind is answering :
 Hark the running stream replieth :
 There is rest for him that dieth :
 In the grave whoever lieth
 Nevermore hath sorrowing.
 Holy slumber, holy quiet,
 Close the eyes and still the riot :
 And the brain forgets its thought,
 And the heart forgets its beating.
 Earth and earthly things are
 fleeting ;
 There is what all men have sought—
 Long unchangeable repose,
 Lulling us from many woes.

7 November 1847.

THE WORLD'S HARMONIES

OH listen, listen, for the Earth
 Hath silent melody :
 Green grasses are her lively chords,
 And blossoms : and each tree,
 Chestnut and oak and sycamore,
 Makes solemn harmony.

Oh listen, listen, for the Sea
 Is calling unto us :
 Her notes are the broad liquid
 waves
 Mighty and glorious.
 Lo the first man and the last man
 Hath heard, shall hearken thus.

The Sun on which men cannot look,
 Its splendour is so strong,
 Which wakeneth life and giveth life,
 Rolling in light along,
 From day-dawn to dim eventide
 Sings the eternal song.

And the Moon taketh up the hymn,
 And the Stars answer all :
 And all the Clouds and all the
 Winds
 And all the Dews that fall
 And Frost and fertilizing Rain
 Are mutely musical.

Fishes and Beasts and feathered
 Fowl
 Swell the eternal chaunt,
 That riseth through the lower air,
 Over the rainbow slant,
 Up through the unseen palace-gates,
 Fearlessly jubilant.

Before the everlasting Throne
 It is acceptable :
 It hath no pause or faltering :
 The Angels know it well :
 Yea in the highest heaven of heavens
 Its sound is audible.

Yet than the voice of the whole World
 There is a sweeter voice,
 That maketh all the Cherubim
 And Seraphim rejoice :
 That all the blessed Spirits hail
 With undivided choice :

That crieth at the golden door
 And gaineth entrance in :

That the palm-branch and radiant
 crown

And glorious throne may win :—
 The lowly prayer of a Poor Man
 Who turneth from his sin.

20 November 1847.

THE LAST ANSWER

(Written to Bouts-rimés.)

SHE turned round to me with her
 steadfast eyes.

'I tell you I have looked upon
 the dead ;

Have kissed the brow and the
 cold lips,' she said ;

'Have called upon the sleeper to
 arise.

He loved me, yet he stirred not : on
 this wise,

Not bowing in weak agony my
 head,

But all too sure of what life is, to
 dread,

Learned I that love and hope are
 fallacies.'

She gazed quite calmly on me : and
 I felt

Awed and astonished and almost
 afraid :

For what was I to have ad-
 monished her ?

Then, being full of doubt and fear,
 I knelt,

And tears came to my eyes even
 as I prayed :

But she meanwhile only grew
 statelier.

2 December 1847.

DEVOTIONAL POEMS

I DO SET MY BOW IN THE
CLOUD

THE roses bloom too late for me :
 The violets I shall not see :
 Even the snowdrops will not come
 Till I have passed from home to home :
 From home on earth to home in
 heaven,
 Here penitent and there forgiven.

Mourn not, my Father, that I seek
 One who is strong when I am weak.
 Through the dark passage, verily,
 His rod and staff shall comfort me :
 He shall support me in the strife
 Of death that dieth into life :
 He shall support me, He receive
 My soul when I begin to live,
 And more than I can ask for give.

He from the heaven-gates built above
 Hath looked on me in perfect love.
 From the heaven-walls to me He
 calls
 To come and dwell within those
 walls :

With Cherubim and Seraphim
 And Angels : yea, beholding Him.

His care for me is more than mine,
 Father ; His love is more than thine.
 Sickness and death I have from thee,
 From Him have immortality.
 He giveth gladness where He will,
 Yet chasteneth His beloved still.

Then tell me : is it not enough
 To feel that, when the path is rough
 And the sky dark and the rain cold,
 His promise standeth as of old ?

When heaven and earth have past
 away

Only His righteous word shall stay,
 And we shall know His will is best.
 Behold : He is a haven-rest,
 A sheltering-rock, a hiding-place,
 For runners steadfast in the race ;
 Who, toiling for a little space,
 Had light through faith when sight
 grew dim,
 And offered all their world to Him.

December 1847.

DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP
IN VICTORY

‘TELL me : doth it not grieve thee
 to lie here,
 And see the cornfields waving not
 for thee,
 Just in the waking summer of the
 year ?’

‘I fade from earth, and lo along
 with me
 The season that I love will fade
 away ;
 How should I look for autumn
 longingly ?’

‘Yet autumn beareth fruit whilst day
 by day
 The leaves grow browner with a
 mellow hue,
 Declining to a beautiful decay.’

‘Decay is death, with which I
 have to do,
 And see it near : behold, it is more
 good
 Than length of days and length
 of sorrow too.’

'But thy heart hath not dwelt in
solitude ;

Many have loved and love thee :
dost not heed

Free love, for which in vain have
others sued ?'

'I thirst for love, love is mine
only need,

Love such as none hath borne me
nor can bear,

True love that prompteth thought
and word and deed.'

'Here it is not : why seek it other-
where ?

Nay, bow thy head, and own that
on this earth

Are many goodly things and sweet
and fair.'

'There are tears in man's laughter :
in his mirth

There is a fearful forward look ; and lo
An infant's cry gives token of its
birth.'

'I mark the ocean of Time ebb and
flow :

He who hath care one day and is
perplexed

To-morrow may have joy in place of
woe.'

'Evil becomes good : and to this
annext

Good becomes evil : speak of it no
more :

My heart is wearied and my spirit
vext.'

'Is there no place it grieves thee to
give o'er ?

Is there no home thou lov'st, and
so wouldst fain

Tarry a little longer at the door ?'

'I must go hence and not return
again :

But the friends whom I have shall
come to me,

And dwell together with me safe
from pain.'

'Where is that mansion mortals
cannot see ?

Behold, the tombs are full of
worms : shalt thou

Rise thence and soar up skywards
gloriously ?'

'Even as the planets shine we
know not how,

We shall be raised then, changed
yet still the same—

Being made like Christ, yea being
as He is now.'

'Thither thou go'st whence no man
ever came :

Death's voyagers return not, and
in death

There is no room for speech or sign
or fame.'

'There is room for repose that
comforteth ;

There weariness is not : and there
content

Broodeth for ever, and hope
hovereth.'

'When the stars fall and when the
graves are rent,

Shalt thou have safety ? shalt thou
look for life

When the great light of the broad
sun is spent ?'

'These elements shall consum-
mate their strife,

This heaven and earth shall shrivel
like a scroll,

And then be re-created, beauty-
rife.'

'Who shall abide it when from pole
to pole

The world's foundations shall be
overthrown ?

Who shall abide to scan the perfect
whole ?'

'He who hath strength given to
him, not his own :
He who hath faith in that which is
not seen,
And patient hope : who trusts in
Love alone.'

'Yet thou—the death-struggle must
intervene

Ere thou win rest : think better
of it : think

Of all that is and shall be and hath
been.'

'The cup my Father giveth me to
drink,
Shall I not take it meekly ? though
my heart

Tremble a moment, it shall never
shrink.'

'Satan will wrestle with thee when
thou art

In the last agony ; and Death
will bring

Sins to remembrance ere thy spirit
part.'

'In that great hour of unknown
suffering

God shall be with me, and His arm
made bare

Shall fight for me : yea, under-
neath His wing

I shall lie safe at rest and freed
from care.'

20 February 1848.

SYMBOLS

I WATCHED a rosebud very long
Brought on by dew and sun and
shower,

Waiting to see the perfect flower :
Then, when I thought it should be
strong,

It opened at the matin hour
And fell at evensong.

I watched a nest from day to day,
A green nest full of pleasant shade,
Wherein three speckled eggs were
laid :

But when they should have hatched
in May,

The two old birds had grown
afraid

Or tired, and flew away.

Then in my wrath I broke the bough
That I had tended so with care,
Hoping its scent should fill the air ;
I crushed the eggs, not heeding how
Their ancient promise had been
fair :

I would have vengeance now.

But the dead branch spoke from the
sod,

And the eggs answered me again :
Because we failed dost thou com-
plain ?

Is thy wrath just ? And what if God,
Who waiteth for thy fruits in vain,
Should also take the rod ?

7 January 1849.

SWEET DEATH

THE sweetest blossoms die.

And so it was that, going day by
day

Unto the Church to praise and
pray,

And crossing the green churchyard
thoughtfully,

I saw how on the graves the
flowers

Shed their fresh leaves in showers,
And how their perfume rose up to
the sky

Before it passed away.

The youngest blossoms die.

They die and fall and nourish the
rich earth

From which they lately had their
birth ;

Sweet life, but sweeter death that
passeth by

And is as though it had not
been :—

All colours turn to green ;

The bright hues vanish, and the
odours fly,

The grass hath lasting worth.

And youth and beauty die.

So be it, O my God, Thou God
of Truth :

Better than beauty and than youth
Are Saints and Angels, a glad
company ;

And Thou, O Lord, our Rest and
Ease,

Art better far than these.

Why should we shrink from our full
harvest ? why

Prefer to glean with Ruth ?

9 February 1849.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

THANK God, thank God, we do
believe :

Thank God that this is Christmas Eve.

Even as we kneel upon this day,

Even so, the ancient legends say,

Nearly two thousand years ago

The stalled ox knelt, and even so

The ass knelt full of praise, which
they

Could not express, while we can pray.

Thank God, thank God, for Christ
was born

Ages ago, as on this morn.

In the snow-season undefiled

God came to earth a little child :

He put His ancient glory by

To live for us and then to die.

How shall we thank God ? How
shall we

Thank Him and praise Him worthily ?

What will He have who loved us thus ?

What presents will He take from us ?

Will He take gold, or precious heap

Of gems ? or shall we rather steep

The air with incense, or bring myrrh ?

What man will be our messenger

To go to Him and ask His will ?

Which having learned, we will fulfil

Though He choose all we most
prefer :—

What man will be our messenger ?

Thank God, thank God, the Man is
found,

Sure-footed, knowing well the ground.

He knows the road, for this the way

He travelled once, as on this day.

He is our Messenger beside,

He is our door and path and Guide :

He also is our Offering :

He is the gift that we must bring.

Let us kneel down with one accord

And render thanks unto the Lord :

For unto us a Child is born

Upon this happy Christmas morn ;

For unto us a Son is given,

Firstborn of God and Heir of
Heaven.

7 March 1849.

FOR ADVENT

SWEET sweet sound of distant waters,
falling

On a parched and thirsty plain :

Sweet sweet song of soaring skylark,
calling

On the sun to shine again :
Perfume of the rose, only the fresher
For past fertilizing rain :
Pearls amid the sea, a hidden treasure
For some daring hand to gain :—
Better, dearer than all these
Is the earth beneath the trees :
Of a much more priceless worth
Is the old brown common earth.

Little snow-white lamb, piteously
bleating
For thy mother far away :
Saddest sweetest nightingale, re-
treating

With thy sorrow from the day :
Weary fawn whom night has over-
taken,

From the herd gone quite astray :
Dove whose nest was rifled and for-
saken

In the budding month of May :—
Roost upon the leafy trees,
Lie on earth and take your
ease :

Death is better far than birth :
You shall turn again to earth.

Listen to the never-pausing murmur
Of the waves that fret the shore :
See the ancient pine that stands the
firmer

For the storm-shock that it bore :
And the moon her silver chalice
filling

With light from the great sun's
store :

And the stars which deck our
temple's ceiling

As the flowers deck its floor :
Look and hearken while you may,
For these things shall pass away :

All these things shall fail and
cease :

Let us wait the end in peace.

Let us wait the end in peace, for truly
That shall cease which was before :
Let us see our lamps are lighted, duly
Fed with oil nor wanting more :
Let us pray while yet the Lord will
hear us,

For the time is almost o'er :
Yea, the end of all is very near us :
Yea, the Judge is at the door.
Let us pray now, while we may :
It will be too late to pray
When the quick and dead shall all
Rise at the last trumpet-call.

12 March 1849.

TWO PURSUITS

A VOICE said, 'Follow, follow' : and
I rose

And followed far into the dreamy
night,

Turning my back upon the
pleasant light.

It led me where the bluest water
flows,

And would not let me drink : where
the corn grows

I dared not pause, but went un-
cheered by sight

Or touch : until at length in evil
plight

It left me, wearied out with many
woes.

Some time I sat as one bereft of
sense :

But soon another voice from very
far

Called, 'Follow, follow' : and
I rose again.

Now on my night has dawned a
blessed star :
Kind steady hands my sinking
steps sustain,
And will not leave me till I shall go
hence.

12 April 1849.

ONE CERTAINTY

VANITY of vanities, the Preacher
saith,

All things are vanity. The eye
and ear

Cannot be filled with what they
see and hear.

Like early dew, or like the sudden
breath

Of wind, or like the grass that
withereth,

Is man, tossed to and fro by hope
and fear :

So little joy hath he, so little
cheer,

Till all things end in the long dust
of death.

To-day is still the same as yesterday,
To-morrow also even as one of
them ;

And there is nothing new under
the sun :

Until the ancient race of Time
be run,

The old thorns shall grow out of
the old stem,

And morning shall be cold and
twilight grey.

2 June 1849.

A TESTIMONY

I SAID of laughter : it is vain.
Of mirth I said : what profits it ?

Therefore I found a book, and writ
Therein how ease and also pain,
How health and sickness, every one
Is vanity beneath the sun.

Man walks in a vain shadow ; he
Disquieteth himself in vain.

The things that were shall be
again ;

The rivers do not fill the sea,
But turn back to their secret source ;
The winds too turn upon their course.

Our treasures moth and rust corrupt,
Orthieves break through and steal,
or they

Make themselves wings and fly
away.

One man made merry as he supped,
Nor guessed how when that night
grew dim

His soul would be required of him.

We build our houses on the sand

Comely withoutside and within ;

But when the winds and rains begin
To beat on them, they cannot stand :
They perish, quickly overthrown,
Loose from the very basement stone.

All things are vanity, I said :

Yea vanity of vanities.

The rich man dies ; and the poor
dies :

The worm feeds sweetly on the dead.
Whate'er thou lackest, keep this
trust :

All in the end shall have but dust :

The one inheritance, which best

And worst alike shall find and
share :

The wicked cease from troubling
there,

And there the weary be at rest ;
There all the wisdom of the wise
Is vanity of vanities.

Man flourishes as a green leaf,
And as a leaf doth pass away ;
Or as a shade that cannot stay
And leaves no track, his course is
brief :

Yet man doth hope and fear and plan
Till he is dead :—oh foolish man !

Our eyes cannot be satisfied
With seeing, nor our ears be filled
With hearing : yet we plant and
build

And buy and make our borders wide ;
We gather wealth, we gather care,
But know not who shall be our heir.

Why should we hasten to arise
So early, and so late take rest ?
Our labour is not good ; our best
Hopes fade ; our heart is stayed on
lies.

Verily, we sow wind ; and we
Shall reap the whirlwind, verily.

He who hath little shall not lack ;
He who hath plenty shall decay :
Our fathers went ; we pass away ;
Our children follow on our track :
So generations fail, and so
They are renewed and come and go.

The earth is fattened with our dead ;
She swallows more and doth not
cease :

Therefore her wine and oil increase
And her sheaves are not numbered ;
Therefore her plants are green, and
all

Her pleasant trees lusty and tall.

Therefore the maidens cease to sing,
And the young men are very sad ;
Therefore the sowing is not glad,
And mournful is the harvesting.
Of high and low, of great and
small,
Vanity is the lot of all.

A King dwelt in Jerusalem ;
He was the wisest man on earth ;
He had all riches from his birth,
And pleasures till he tired of them ;
Then, having tested all things, he
Witnessed that all are vanity.

31 August 1849.

SONGS FOR STRANGERS AND PILGRIMS

(From 2 March 1850 to before 1893.)

' Her Seed ; It shall bruise thy head.'

ASTONISHED Heaven looked on when
man was made,
When fallen man reproved seemed
half forgiven ;
Surely that oracle of hope, first said,
Astonished Heaven.

Even so while one by one lost
souls are shriven,
A mighty multitude of quickened
dead ;
Christ's love outnumbering ten
times sevenfold seven.

Even so while man still tosses high
his head,
While still the All-Holy Spirit's
strife is striven ;—
Till one last trump shake earth, and
undismayed
Astonished Heaven.

Before 1887.

Judge nothing before the time.

LOVE understands the mystery,
whereof

We can but spell a surface history:
Love knows, remembers: let us trust
in Love:

Love understands the mystery.

Love weighs the event, the long
pre-history,
Measures the depth beneath, the
height above,
The mystery, with the ante-
mystery.

To love and to be grieved befits a dove
Silently telling her bead-history:
Trust all to Love, be patient and
approve:

Love understands the mystery.
Before 1886.

How great is little man!

Sun, moon, and stars respond to
him,
Shine or grow dim
Harmonious with his span.

How little is great man!

More changeable than changeful
moon,
Nor half in tune
With Heaven's harmonious plan.

Ah rich man! ah poor man!

Make ready for the testing day
When wastes away
What bears not fire or fan.

Thou heir of all things, man,
Pursue the saints by heavenward
track:

They looked not back;
Run thou, as erst they ran.

Little and great is man:

Great if he will, or if he will
A pigmy still;
For what he will he can.

Before 1893.

MAN'S life is but a working day

Whose tasks are set aright:
A time to work, a time to pray,
And then a quiet night.
And then, please God, a quiet night
Where palms are green and robes
are white;

A long-drawn breath, a balm for
sorrow,
And all things lovely on the morrow.
19 March 1864.

IF not with hope of life,
Begin with fear of death:
Strive the tremendous life-long strife
Breath after breath.

Bleed on beneath the rod;
Weep on until thou see;
Turn fear and hope to love of God
Who loveth thee.

Turn all to love, poor soul;
Be love thy watch and ward;
Be love thy starting-point, thy goal,
And thy reward.

Before 1893.

The day is at hand.

WATCH yet a while,
Weep till that day shall dawn when
thou shalt smile:
Watch till the day
When all save only Love shall pass
away.

Then Love rejoicing shall forget to weep,
 Shall hope or fear no more, or watch or sleep,
 But only love and stint not, deep beyond deep.
 Now we sow love in tears, but then shall reap.
 Have patience as True Love's own flock of sheep :
 Have patience with His Love
 Who served for us, Who reigns for us above.

Before 1886.

Endure hardness.

A COLD wind stirs the blackthorn
 To burgeon and to blow,
 Besprinkling half-green hedges
 With flakes and sprays of snow.

Thro' coldness and thro' keenness,
 Dear hearts, take comfort so :
 Somewhere or other doubtless
 These make the blackthorn blow.

Before 1886.

' Whither the Tribes go up, even the Tribes
 of the Lord.'

LIGHT is our sorrow for it ends to-morrow,
 Light is our death which cannot hold us fast ;
 So brief a sorrow can be scarcely sorrow,
 Or death be death so quickly past.

One night, no more, of pain that turns to pleasure,
 One night, no more, of weeping weeping sore ;
 And then the heaped-up measure beyond measure,
 In quietness for evermore.

Our face is set like flint against our trouble,
 Yet many things there are which comfort us ;
 This bubble is a rainbow-coloured bubble,
 This bubble-life tumultuous.

Our sails are set to cross the tossing river,
 Our face is set to reach Jerusalem ;
 We toil awhile, but then we rest for ever,
 Sing with all Saints and rest with them.

Circa 1877.

WHERE never tempest heaveth,
 Nor sorrow grieveth,
 Nor death bereaveth,
 Nor hope deceiveth,
 Sleep.

Where never shame bewaileth,
 Nor serpent traileth,
 Nor death prevaileth,
 Nor harvest faileth,
 Reap.

Before 1893.

MARVEL of marvels, if I myself shall behold
 With mine own eyes my King in His city of gold ;
 Where the least of lambs is spotless white in the fold,
 Where the least and last of saints in spotless white is stoled,
 Where the dimmest head beyond a moon is aureoled.
 O saints, my beloved, now mouldering to mould in the mould,
 Shall I see you lift your heads, see your cerements unrolled,

See with these very eyes? who now
in darkness and cold
Tremble for the midnight cry, the
rapture, the tale untold,
'The Bridegroom cometh, cometh,
His Bride to enfold.'

Cold it is, my beloved, since your
funeral bell was tolled:
Cold it is, O my King, how cold
alone on the wold.

Before 1893.

What is that to thee? follow thou Me.

LIE still, my restive heart, lie still:
God's Word to thee saith, 'Wait
and bear.'

The good which He appoints is good,
The good which He denies were ill:
Yea, subtle comfort is thy care,
Thy hurt a help not understood.

'Friend, go up higher,' to one: to
one,

'Friend, enter thou My joy,' He
saith:

To one, 'Be faithful unto death.'
For some a wilderness doth flower,
Or day's work in one hour is done:—
'But thou, couldst thou not watch
one hour?'

Lord, I had chosen another lot,
But then I had not chosen well;
Thy choice and only Thine is good:
No different lot, search heaven or
hell,
Had blessed me, fully understood;
None other, which Thou orderest not.

Before 1886.

'Worship God.'

LORD, if Thy word had been
'Worship Me not,

For I than thou am holier: draw
not near':

We had besieged Thy Face with
prayer and tear
And manifold abasement in our
lot,

Our crooked ground, our thorned
and thistled plot;*

Envious of flawless Angels in their
sphere,

Envious of brutes, and envious of
the mere

Unliving and undying unbegot.

But now Thou hast said, 'Worship
Me, and give

Thy heart to Me, My child'; now
therefore we

Think twice before we stoop to
worship Thee:

We proffer half a heart while life
is strong

And strung with hope; so sweet it
is to live!

Wilt Thou not wait? Yea, Thou
hast waited long.

Before 1893.

'Afterward he repented, and went.'

LORD, when my heart was whole I
kept it back

And grudged to give it Thee.

Now then that it is broken, must I
lack

Thy kind word 'Give it Me'?

Silence would be but just, and Thou
art just.

Yet since I lie here shattered in the
dust,

With still an eye to lift to Thee,

A broken heart to give,

I think that Thou wilt bid me live,

And answer 'Give it Me.'

Before 1886.

Are they not all Ministering Spirits?

LORD, whomsoever Thou shalt send
to me, 1

Let that same be

Mine Angel predilect:

Veiled or unveiled, benignant or
austere,

Aloof or near;

Thine, therefore mine, elect.

So may my soul nurse patience day
by day,

Watch on and pray

Obedient and at peace;

Living a lonely life in hope, in faith;

Loving till death,

When life, not love, shall cease.

. . . Lo, thou mine Angel with
transfigured face

Brimful of grace,

Brimful of love for me!

Did I misdoubt thee all that weary
while,

Thee with a smile

For me as I for thee?

Before 1893.

OUR life is long. Not so, wise
Angels say

Who watch us waste it, trembling
while they weigh

Against eternity one squandered day.

Our life is long. Not so, the Saints
protest,

Filled full of consolation and of rest:

'Short ill, long good, one long un-
ending best.'

Our life is long. Christ's word
sounds different:

'Night cometh: no more work when
day is spent.'

Repent and work to-day, work and
repent.

Lord, make us like Thy Host who
day nor night

Rest not from adoration, their de-
light,

Crying 'Holy, Holy, Holy,' in the
height.

Lord, make us like Thy Saints who
wait and long

Contented: bound in hope and freed
from wrong,

They speed (may be) their vigil with
a song.

Lord, make us like Thyself; for
thirty-three

Slow years of toil seemed not too
long to Thee,

That where Thou art there Thy
Beloved might be.

Before 1886.

LORD, what have I to offer? sicken-
ing fear

And a heart-breaking loss.

Are these the cross Thou givest me?
then dear

I will account this cross.

If this is all I have, accept even this
Poor priceless offering,

A quaking heart with all that therein
is,

O Thou my thorn-crowned King.

Accept the whole, my God, accept
my heart

And its own love within:

Wilt Thou accept us and not sift
apart?

—Only sift out my sin.

Before 1886.

Joy is but sorrow,
While we know
It ends to-morrow :—
Even so !

Joy with lifted veil
Shows a face as pale

As the fair changing moon so fair
and frail.

Pain is but pleasure,
If we know
It heaps up treasure :—
Even so !

Turn, transfigured Pain,
Sweetheart, turn again,

For fair thou art as moonrise after
rain.

Before 1886.

‘CAN I know it?’—‘Nay.’—
‘Shall I know it?’—‘Yea,
When all mists have cleared away
For ever and aye.’—

‘Why not then to-day?’—
‘Who hath said thee nay?
Lift a hopeful heart and pray
In a humble way.’

‘Other hearts are gay.’—
‘Ask not joy to-day :
Toil to-day along thy way
Keeping grudge at bay.’—

‘On a past May-day
Flowers pranked all the way ;
Nightingales sang out their say
On a night of May.’—

‘Dost thou covet May
On an Autumn day?
Foolish memory saith its say
Of sweets past away.’—

‘Gone the bloom of May,
Autumn beareth bay :
Flowerless wreath for head grown
grey
Seemly were to-day.’—

‘Dost thou covet bay?
Ask it not to-day :
Rather for a palm-branch pray ;
None will say thee nay.’

Before 1893.

When my heart is vexed I will complain.

‘THE fields are white to harvest,
look and see,
Are white abundantly.
The full-orbed harvest moon shines
clear,
The harvest time draws near,
Be of good cheer.’

‘Ah woe is me !
I have no heart for harvest time,
Grown sick with hope deferred from
chime to chime.’

‘But Christ can give thee heart Who
loveth thee :
Can set thee in the eternal ecstasy
Of His great jubilee :
Can give thee dancing heart and
shining face,
And lips filled full of grace,
And pleasures as the rivers and the
sea.

Who knocketh at His door
He welcomes evermore :
Kneel down before

That ever-open door
(The time is short) and smite
Thy breast, and pray with all thy
might.'

'What shall I say?'

'Nay, pray.

Tho' one but say "Thy Will be done,"
He hath not lost his day
At set of sun.'

Before 1886.

'Praying always.'

AFTER midnight, in the dark
The clock strikes one,
New day has begun.
Look up and hark!
With singing heart forestall the
carolling lark.

After mid-day, in the light
The clock strikes one,
Day-fall has begun.
Cast up, set right
The day's account against the on-
coming night.

After noon and night, one day
For ever one
Ends not, once begun.
Whither away,
O brothers and O sisters? Pause
and pray.

Before 1886.

'As thy days, so shall thy strength be.'

DAY that hath no tinge of night,
Night that hath no tinge of day,
These at last will come to sight
Not to fade away.

This is twilight that we know,
Scarcely night and scarcely day;

This hath been from long ago
Shed around man's way:

Step by step to utter night,
Step by step to perfect day,
To the Left Hand or the Right
Leading all away.

This is twilight: be it so;
Suited to our strength our day:
Let us follow on to know,
Patient by the way.

Before 1893.

A HEAVY heart, if ever heart was
heavy,
I offer Thee this heavy heart of
me.

Are such as this the hearts Thou art
fain to levy
To do and dare for Thee, to
bleed for Thee?
Ah blessed heaviness if such they
be!

Time was I bloomed with blossom
and stood leafy,
How long before the fruit if fruit
there be:
Lord, if by bearing fruit my heart
grows heavy,
Leafless and bloomless yet accept
of me
The stripped fruit-bearing heart I
offer Thee.

Lifted to Thee my heart weighs not
so heavy,
It leaps and lightens lifted up to
Thee;
It sings, it hopes to sing amid the
bevy

Of thousand thousand choirs that
sing, and see
Thy Face, me loving, for Thou
lovest me.

Before 1886.

IF love is not worth loving, then
life is not worth living,
Nor aught is worth remembering
but well forgot ;
For store is not worth storing and
gifts are not worth giving,
If love is not ;

And idly cold is death-cold, and
life-heat idly hot,
And vain is any offering and vainer
our receiving,
And vanity of vanities is all our
lot.

Better than life's heaving heart is
death's heart unheaving,
Better than the opening leaves
are the leaves that rot,
For there is nothing left worth
achieving or retrieving,
If love is not.

Before 1886.

WHAT is it Jesus saith unto the
soul ?

'Take up the Cross, and come
and follow Me.'

One word He saith to all men :
none may be

Without a cross yet hope to touch
the goal.

Then heave it bravely up, and brace
thy whole

Body to bear ; it will not weigh
on thee

Past strength ; or if it crush thee
to thy knee

Take heart of grace, for grace shall
be thy dole.

Give thanks to-day, and let to-morrow
take

Heed to itself ; to-day imports
thee more.

To-morrow may not dawn like
yesterday :

Until that unknown morrow go
thy way,

Suffer and work and strive for Jesus'
sake :—

Who tells thee what to-morrow
keeps in store ?

2 March 1850 to before 1886.

THEY lie at rest, our blessed dead ;
The dews drop cool above their
head,

They knew not when fleet summer
fled.

Together all, yet each alone ;
Each laid at rest beneath his own
Smooth turf or white allotted stone.

When shall our slumber sink so
deep,

And eyes that wept and eyes that
wept

Weep not in the sufficient sleep ?

God be with you, our great and
small,

Our loves, our best beloved of all,
Our own beyond the salt sea-wall.

Before 1886.

'Ye that fear Him, both small and great.'

GREAT or small below,

Great or small above ;

Be we Thine, whom Thou dost know
And love ;

First or last on earth,
First or last in Heaven ;
Only weighted with Thy worth,
And shriven.

Wise or ignorant,
Strong or weak ; Amen ;
Sifted now, cast down, in want :—
But then ?

Then,—when sun nor moon,
Time nor death, finds place,
Seeing in the eternal noon
Thy Face :

Then,—when tears and sighing,
Changes, sorrows, cease ;
Living by Thy Life undying
In peace :

Then,—when all creation
Keeps its jubilee,
Crowned amid Thy holy nation ;
Crowned, discrowned, in adoration
Of Thee.

Circa 1877.

Called to be Saints.

THE lowest place. Ah, Lord, how
steep and high
That lowest place whereon a saint
shall sit !

Which of us halting, trembling,
pressing nigh,
Shall quite attain to it ?

Yet, Lord, Thou pressest nigh to
hail and grace
Some happy soul, it may be still
unfit

For Right Hand or for Left Hand,
but whose place
Waits there prepared for it.

Before 1886.

THE sinner's own fault ? So it was.
If every own fault found us out,
Dogged us and hedged us round
about,

What comfort should we take because
Not half our due we thus wrung
out ?

Clearly his own fault. Yet I think
'My fault in part, who did not pray
But lagged and would not lead
the way.

I, haply, proved his missing link.
God help us both to mend and
pray.

Before 1886.

WHO cares for earthly bread the
white ?

Nay, heavenly sheaf of harvest
corn !

Who cares for earthly crown to-night ?

Nay, heavenly crown to-morrow
morn !

I will not wander left or right,
The straightest road is shortest
too ;

And since we hold all hope in view
And triumph where is no more pain,
To-night I bid good night to you
And bid you meet me there again.

Before 1886.

LAUGHING Life cries at the feast,—
Craving Death cries at the door,—
'Fish or fowl or fatted beast ?'

'Come with me, thy feast is o'er.'—
'Wreath the violets.'—'Watch them
fade.'—

'I am sunshine.'—'I am shade :
I am the sun-burying west.'—
'I am pleasure.'—'I am rest :
Come with me, for I am best.'

Before 1886.

The end is not yet.

HOME by different ways. Yet all
Homeward bound thro' prayer
and praise,
Young with old, and great with
small,
Home by different ways.

Many nights and many days
Wind must bluster, rain must fall,
Quake the quicksand, shift the
haze.

Life hath called and death will call
Saints who praying kneel at gaze,
Ford the flood or leap the wall,
Home by different ways.

Before 1886.

WHO would wish back the Saints
upon our rough
Wearisome road ?
Wish back a breathless soul
Just at the goal ?
My soul, praise God
For all dear souls which have enough.

I would not fetch one back to hope
with me
A hope deferred,
To taste a cup that slips
From thirsting lips :—
Hath he not heard
And seen what was to hear and see ?

How could I stand to answer the
rebuke
If one should say :
'O friend of little faith,
Good was my death,
And good my day
Of rest, and good the sleep I took' ?

13 December 1861.

R

'That which hath been is named already,
and it is known that it is Man.'

'EYE hath not seen' :—yet man
hath known and weighed
A hundred thousand marvels that
have been :
What is it which (the Word of Truth
hath said)
Eye hath not seen ?

'Ear hath not heard' :—yet harpings
of delight,
Trumpets of triumph, song and
spoken word,
Man knows them all : what lovelier,
loftier might
Hath ear not heard ?

'Nor heart conceived' :—yet man
hath now desired
Beyond all reach, beyond his hope
believed,
Loved beyond death : what fire shall
yet be fired
No heart conceived ?

'Deep calls to deep' :—man's depth
would be despair
But for God's deeper depth : we
sow to reap.
Have patience, wait, betake ourselves
to prayer :
Deep answereth deep.

Before 1886.

OF each sad word which is more
sorrowful,
'Sorrow' or 'Disappointment' ?
I have heard
Subtle inflections, baffling subtlest
rule,
Of each sad word.

K

Sorrow can mourn: and lo a
mourning bird
Sings sweetly to sweet echoes of its
duple,

While silent disappointment
broods unstirred.

Yet both nurse hope, where Penitence
keeps school

Who makes fools wise and saints
of them that erred:

Wise men shape stepping stone, or
curb, or tool,
Of each sad word.

Before 1886.

I see that all things come to an end.

I

No more! while sun and planets fly,
And wind and storm and seasons
four,

And while we live and while we
die,—

No more.

Nevertheless old ocean's roar,
And wide earth's multitudinous cry,
And echo's pent reverberant store,

Shall hush to silence by and by:
Ah rosy world gone cold and
hoar!

Man opes no more a mortal eye,
No more.

Before 1886.

But Thy Commandment is exceeding broad.

II

ONCE again to wake, nor wish to
sleep;

Once again to feel, nor feel a pain!

Rouse thy soul to watch and pray
and weep
Once again.

Hope afresh, for hope shall not
be vain:

Start afresh along the exceeding
steep

Road to glory, long and rough
and plain.

Sow and reap: for while these
moments creep,

Time and earth and life are on
the wane:

Now, in tears; to-morrow, laugh
and reap

Once again.

Before 1886.

Sursum Corda.

'LIFT up your hearts.' 'We lift
them up.' Ah me!

I cannot, Lord, lift up my heart to
Thee:

Stoop, lift it up, that where Thou art
I too may be.

'Give Me thy heart.' I would not
say Thee nay,

But have no power to keep or give
away

My heart: stoop, Lord, and take it
to Thyself to-day.

Stoop, Lord, as once before, now
once anew;

Stoop, Lord, and hearken, hearken,
Lord, and do,

And take my will, and take my heart,
and take me too.

Before 1886.

O YE, who are not dead and fit
Like blasted tree beside the pit
But for the axe that levels it,

Living show life of love, whereof
The force wields earth and heaven
above :

Who knows not love begetteth love ?

Love poises earth in space, Love rolls
Wide worlds rejoicing on their poles,
And girds them round with aureoles.

Love lights the sun, Love thro' the
dark

Lights the moon's evanescent arc,
Lights up the star, lights up the spark.

O ye who taste that love is sweet,
Set waymarks for all doubtful feet
That stumble on in search of it.

Sing notes of love : that some who
hear

Far off inert may lend an ear,
Rise up and wonder and draw near.

Lead life of love : that others who
Behold your life may kindle too
With love, and cast their lot with you.

Before 1886.

WHERE shall I find a white rose
blowing ?—

Out in the garden where all sweets
be.—

But out in my garden the snow was
snowing

And never a white rose opened for
me.

Nought but snow and a wind were
blowing

And snowing.

Where shall I find a blush rose
blushing ?—

On the garden wall or the garden
bed.—

But out in my garden the rain was
rushing

And never a blush rose raised its
head.

Nothing glowing, flushing or blush-
ing :

Rain rushing.

Where shall I find a red rose bud-
ding ?—

Out in the garden where all things
grow.—

But out in my garden a flood was
flooding

And never a red rose began to
blow.

Out in a flooding what should be
budding ?

All flooding !

Now is winter and now is sorrow,
No roses but only thorns to-
day :

Thorns will put on roses to-morrow,
Winter and sorrow scudding away.

No more winter and no more sorrow
To-morrow.

Circa 1884.

Redeeming the Time.

A LIFE of hope deferred too often is
A life of wasted opportunities ;

A life of perished hope too often is

A life of all-lost opportunities :

Yet hope is but the flower and not
the root,

And hope is still the flower and not
the fruit ;—

Arise and sow and weed : a day
shall come

When also thou shalt keep thy
harvest home.

Before 1886.

Now they desire a Better Country.

LOVE said nay, while Hope kept
saying

All his sweetest say,

Hope so keen to start a-maying !—

Love said nay.

Love was bent to watch and pray ;

Long the watching, long the praying ;

Hope grew drowsy, pale and grey.

Hope in dreams set off a-straying,

All his dream - world flushed by

May ;

While unslumbering, praying, weigh-
ing,

Love said nay.

Before 1886.

A CASTLE-BUILDER'S WORLD

The line of confusion, and the stones of
emptiness.

UNRIPE harvest there hath none to
reap it

From the misty gusty place,

Unripe vineyard there hath none to
keep it

In unprofitable space.

Living men and women are not found
there,

Only masks in flocks and shoals ;

Flesh - and - bloodless hazy masks
surround there

Ever wavering orbs and poles ;

Flesh-and-bloodless vapid masks
abound there,

Shades of bodies without souls.

Before 1886.

These all wait upon Thee.

INNOCENT eyes not ours

Are made to look on flowers,

Eyes of small birds and insects
small :

Morn after summer morn

The sweet rose on her thorn

Opens her bosom to them all.

The least and last of things

That soar on quivering wings,

Or crawl among the grass blades
out of sight,

Have just as clear a right

To their appointed portion of delight

As Queens or Kings.

22 January 1853.

' Doeth well . . . doeth better.'

My love whose heart is tender said
to me,

' A moon lacks light except her
sun befriend her.

Let us keep tryst in heaven, dear
Friend,' said she,

My love whose heart is tender.

From such a loftiness no words
could bend her :

Yet still she spoke of ' us ' and spoke
as ' we,'

Her hope substantial, while my
hope grew slender.

Now keeps she tryst beyond earth's
utmost sea,

Wholly at rest, tho' storms should
toss and rend her ;

And still she keeps my heart and
keeps its key,

My love whose heart is tender.

Before 1886.

OUR heaven must be within our-
selves,
Our home and heaven the work
of faith
All thro' this race of life which shelves
Downward to death.

So faith shall build the boundary
wall,
And hope shall plant the secret
bower,
That both may show magnificent
With gem and flower.

While over all a dome must spread,
And love shall be that dome
above ;
And deep foundations must be laid,
And these are love.

Before 1886.

Vanity of Vanities.

OF all the downfalls in the world,
The flutter of an Autumn leaf
Grows grievous by suggesting
grief :

Who thought, when Spring was first
unfurled,
Of this? The wide world lay em-
pearled ;
Who thought of frost that nips the
world ?

Sigh on, my ditty.

There lurk a hundred subtle stings
To prick us in our daily walk :
An apple cankered on its stalk,
A robin snared for all his wings,
A voice that sang but never sings ;
Yea, sight or sound or silence stings.
Kind Lord, show pity.

6 August 1858.

THE hills are tipped with sunshine,
while I walk
In shadows dim and cold :
The unawakened rose sleeps on her
stalk
In a bud's fold,
Until the sun flood all the world
with gold.

The hills are crowned with glory,
and the glow
Flows widening down apace :
Unto the sunny hill-tops I, set low,
Lift a tired face,—
Ah happy rose, content to wait
for grace !

How tired a face, how tired a brain,
how tired
A heart I lift, who long
For something never felt but still
desired ;
Sunshine and song,
Song where the choirs of sunny
heaven stand choired.

Before 1893.

SCARCE tolerable life, which all life
long
Is dominated by one dread of
death ;
Is such life, life? if so who
pondereth
May call salt sweetness or call dis-
cord song.

Ah me, this solitude where swarms
a throng !

Life slowly grows and dwindles
breath by breath :
Death slowly grows on us ; no
word it saith,
Its cords all lengthened and its
pillars strong.

Life dies apace, a life that but deceives :

Death reigns as tho' it lived, and yet is dead :

Where is the life that dies not but that lives ?

The sweet long life, immortal, ever young,

True life that woos us with a silver tongue

Of hope, much said and much more left unsaid.

Circa 1884.

ALL heaven is blazing yet

With the meridian sun :

Make haste, unshadowing sun, make haste to set ;

O lifeless life, have done.

I choose what once I chose ;

What once I willed, I will :

Only the heart its own bereavement knows ;

O clamorous heart, lie still.

That which I chose, I choose ;

That which I willed, I will ;

That which I once refused, I still refuse :

O hope deferred, be still.

That which I chose and choose

And will is Jesus' Will :

He hath not lost his life who seems to lose :

O hope deferred, hope still.

Before 1886.

Balm in Gilead.

HEARTSEASE I found, where Love-lies-bleeding

Empurpled all the ground :

Whatever flowers I missed unheeding,
Heartsease I found.

Yet still my garden mound
Stood sore in need of watering, weeding,
And binding growths unbound.

Ah when shades fell, to light succeeding,

I scarcely dared look round :

'Love-lies-bleeding' was all my pleading ;

Heartsease I found.

Before 1886.

'In the day of his Espousals.'

THAT Song of Songs which is Solomon's

Sinks and rises, and loves and longs,

Thro' temperate zones and torrid zones,

That Song of Songs.

Fair its floating moon with her prongs :

Love is laid for its paving stones :

Right it sings without thought of wrongs.

Doves it hath with music of moans,
Queens in throngs and damsels in throngs,

High tones and mysterious undertones,

That Song of Songs.

Before 1886.

'She came from the uttermost part of the earth.'

'THE half was not told me,' said Sheba's Queen,

Weighing that wealth of wisdom and of gold :

'Thy fame falls short of this that I
have seen :
The half was not told.

'Happy thy servants who stand
to behold,
Stand to drink in thy gracious
speech and mien ;
Happy, thrice happy, the flock of
thy fold.

'As the darkened moon while a
shadow between
Her face and her kindling sun is
rolled,
I depart ; but my heart keeps
memory green :
The half was not told.'
Before 1886.

ALLELUIA ! or Alas ! my heart is
crying :
So yours is sighing ;
Or replying with content undying,
Alleluia !

'Alas' grieves overmuch for pain
that is ending,
Hurt that is mending,
Life descending soon to be ascend-
ing.—

Alleluia !

Before 1893.

THE Passion Flower hath sprung
up tall,
Hath east and west its arms
outspread ;
The heliotrope shoots up its head
To clear the shadow of the wall :
Down looks the Passion Flower,
The heliotrope looks upward still,
Hour by hour
On the heavenward hill.

The Passion Flower blooms red or
white,

A shadowed white, a cloudless
red ;
Caressingly it droops its head,
Its leaves, its tendrils, from the
light :

Because that lowlier flower
Looks up, but mounts not half so
high,

Hour by hour
Tending toward the sky.

Before 1893.

God's Acre.

HAIL, garden of confident hope !
Where sweet seeds are quickening
in darkness and cold ;
For how sweet and how young
will they be
When they pierce thro' the mould.
Balm, myrtle, and heliotrope
There watch and there wait out
of sight for their Sun :
While the Sun, which they see
not, doth see
Each and all one by one.

Before 1893.

The Flowers appear on the Earth.

YOUNG girls wear flowers,
Young brides a flowery wreath,
But next we plant them
In garden plots of death.
Whose lot is best—
The maiden's curtained rest,
Or bride's whose hoped-for sweet
May yet outstrip her feet ?
Ah what are such as these
To death's sufficing ease ?
He sleeps indeed who sleeps in
peace
Where night and morning meet.

Dear are the blossoms
 For bride's or maiden's head,
 But dearer planted
 Around our blessed dead.
 Those mind us of decay
 And joys that fade away ;
 These preach to us perfection,
 Long love and resurrection.
 We make our graveyards fair,
 For spirit-like birds of air,
 For Angels may be finding there
 Lost Eden's own delection.
26 March 1855.

'Thou knewest . . . thou oughtest
 therefore.'

BEHOLD in heaven a floating dazzling
 cloud,
 So dazzling that I could but cry
 Alas !

Alas, because I felt how low I was ;
 Alas, within my spirit if not aloud,
 Foreviewing my last breathless bed
 and shroud :

Thus pondering, I glanced down-
 ward on the grass ;

And the grass bowed when airs of
 heaven would pass,
 Lifting itself again when it had
 bowed.

That grass spake comfort ; weak it
 was and low,

Yet strong enough and high
 enough to bend

In homage at a message from
 the sky :

As the grass did and prospered,
 so will I ;

Tho' knowing little, doing what I
 know,

And strong in patient weakness
 till the end.

Before 1893.

Go in Peace.

CAN peach renew lost bloom,
 Or violet lost perfume,
 Or sullied snow turn white as over-
 night ?

Man cannot compass it, yet never
 fear :

The leper Naaman
 Shows what God will and can.

God Who worked there is working
 here ;

Wherefore let shame, not gloom,
 betinge thy brow.

God Who worked then is working
 now.

Before 1893.

Half dead.

O CHRIST the Life, look on me
 where I lie

Ready to die :

O Good Samaritan, nay, pass not
 by.

O Christ, my Life, pour in Thine oil
 and wine

To keep me Thine ;

Me ever Thine, and Thee for ever
 mine.

Watch by Thy saints and sinners,
 watch by all

Thy great and small :

Once Thou didst call us all,—O
 Lord, recall.

Think how Thy saints love sinners,
 how they pray

And hope alway,

And thereby grow more like Thee
 day by day.

O Saint of saints, if those with
prayer and vow
Succour us now. . . .
It was not they died for us, it was
Thou.

Before 1893.

'One of the Soldiers with a Spear pierced
His Side.'

AH Lord, we all have pierced Thee :
wilt Thou be

Wroth with us all to slay us all ?
Nay, Lord, be this thing far from
Thee and me :

By whom should we arise, for we
are small,
By whom if not by Thee ?

Lord, if of us who pierced Thee
Thou spare one,
Spare yet one more to love Thy
Face,

And yet another of poor souls undone,
Another, and another—God of
grace,

Let mercy overrun.

Before 1893.

WHERE love is, there comes sorrow
To-day or else to-morrow :
Endure the mood,
Love only means our good.

Where love is, there comes pleasure
With or withouten measure,
Early or late
Cheering the sorriest state.

Where love is, all perfection
Is stored for heart's delection ;
For where love is
Dwells every sort of bliss.

Who would not choose a sorrow
Love's self will cheer to-morrow ?
One day of sorrow,
Then such a long to-morrow !

Before 1886.

BURY Hope out of sight,
No book for it and no bell ;
It never could bear the light
Even while growing and well :
Think if now it could bear
The light on its face of care
And grey scattered hair.

No grave for Hope in the earth,
But deep in that silent soul
Which rang no bell for its birth
And rings no funeral toll.
Cover its once bright head ;
Nor odours nor tears be shed :
It lived once, it is dead.

Brief was the day of its power,
The day of its grace how brief :
As the fading of a flower,
As the falling of a leaf,
So brief its day and its hour ;
No bud more and no bower
Or hint of a flower.

Shall many wail it ? not so :
Shall one bewail it ? not one :
Thus it hath been from long ago,
Thus it shall be beneath the
sun.

O fleet sun, make haste to flee ;
O rivers, fill up the sea ;
O Death, set the dying free.

The sun nor loiters nor speeds,
The rivers run as they ran,
Thro' clouds or thro' windy reeds
All run as when all began.

Only Death turns at our cries :—
Lo the Hope we buried with sighs
Alive in Death's eyes !

Before 1886.

A Churchyard Song of Patient Hope.

ALL tears done away with the bitter
unquiet sea,

Death done away from among
the living at last,

Man shall say of sorrow—Love
grant it to thee and me !—

At last, 'It is past.'

Shall I say of pain 'It is past,' nor
say it with thee,

Thou heart of my heart, thou soul
of my soul, my Friend ?

Shalt thou say of pain 'It is past,'
nor say it with me

Beloved to the end ?

Before 1893.

ONE woe is past. Come what come
will,

Thus much is ended and made
fast :

Two woes may overhang us still ;
One woe is past.

As flowers when winter puffs its
last

Wake in the vale, trail up the hill,
Nor wait for skies to overcast ;

So meek souls rally from the chill
Of pain and fear and poisonous
blast,

To lift their heads : come good, come
ill,

One woe is past.

Before 1893.

Take no thought for the morrow.

WHO knows ? God knows : and
what He knows

Is well and best.

The darkness hideth not from Him,
but glows

Clear as the morning or the evening
rose

Of east or west.

Wherefore man's strength is to sit
still :

Not wasting care

To antedate to-morrow's good or
ill ;

Yet watching meekly, watching with
good will,

Watching to prayer.

Some rising or some setting ray

From east or west,

If not to-day, why then another
day

Will light each dove upon the home-
ward way

Safe to her nest.

Before 1893.

Consider the Lilies of the field.

SOLOMON most glorious in array

Put not on his glories without
care :—

Clothe us as Thy lilies of a day,

As the lilies Thou accountest fair.

Lilies of Thy making,

Of Thy love partaking,

Filling with free fragrance earth
and air :

Thou Who gatherest lilies, gather
us and wear.

Before 1893.

'Son, remember.'

I LAID beside thy gate am Lazarus ;
See me or see me not, I still am
there,

Hungry and thirsty, sore and sick
and bare,

Dog-comforted and crumbs-solici-
tous :

While thou in all thy ways art
sumptuous,

Daintily clothed, with dainties for
thy fare :

Thus a world's wonder thou art
quit of care,

And, be I seen or not seen, I am thus.

One day a worm for thee, a worm
for me :

With my worm angel songs and
trumpet-burst

And plenitude an end of all
desire :

But what for thee, alas ! but what
for thee ?

Fire and an unextinguishable
thirst,

Thirst in an unextinguishable
fire.

Before 1893.

Heaviness may endure for a night, but
Joy cometh in the morning.

No thing is great on this side of the
grave,

Nor any thing of any stable worth :

Whatso is born from earth returns
to earth :

No thing we grasp proves half the
thing we crave :

The tidal wave shrinks to the ebbing
wave :

Laughter is folly, madness lurks
in mirth :

Mankind sets off a-dying from the
birth :

Life is a losing game, with what to
save ?

Thus I sat mourning like a mournful
owl,

And like a doleful dragon made ado,
Companion of all monsters of
the dark :

When lo the light cast off its nightly
cowl,

And up to heaven flashed a
carolling lark,

And all creation sang its hymn
anew.

While all creation sang its hymn anew
What could I do but sing a stave
in tune ?

Spectral on high hung pale the
vanishing moon

Where a last gleam of stars hung
paling too.

Lark's lay—a cockcrow—with a
scattered few

Soft early chirpings—with a tender
croon

Of doves—a hundred thousand
calls, and soon

A hundred thousand answers sweet
and true.

These set me singing too at un-
awares :

One note for all delights and
charities,

One note for hope reviving with
the light,

One note for every lovely thing
that is ;

Till while I sang my heart shook off
its cares

And revelled in the land of no
more night.

Before 1886.

The Will of the Lord be done.

O LORD, fulfil Thy Will,
Be the days few or many, good or ill :
Prolong them, to suffice
For offering up ourselves Thy
sacrifice ;
Shorten them if Thou wilt,
To make in righteousness an end of
guilt.

Yea, they will not be long
To souls who learn to sing a patient
song ;

Yea, short they will not be
To souls on tiptoe to flee home to
Thee.

O Lord, fulfil Thy Will :
Make Thy Will ours, and keep us
patient still,
Be the days few or many, good or ill.

Before 1893.

Lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven.

TREASURE plies a feather,
Pleasure spreadeth wings,
Taking flight together,—
Ah my cherished things !

Fly away, poor pleasure,
That art so brief a thing :
Fly away, poor treasure,
That hast so swift a wing.

Pleasure, to be pleasure,
Must come without a wing :
Treasure, to be treasure,
Must be a stable thing.

Treasure without feather,
Pleasure without wings,
Elsewhere dwell together
And are heavenly things.

Before 1886.

Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth.

‘ ONE sorrow more ? I thought the
tale complete.’—

He bore amiss who grudges what
he bore :

Stretch out thy hands and urge thy
feet to meet

One sorrow more.

Yea, make thy count for two or
three or four :

The kind Physician will not slack
to treat

His patient while there's rankling
in the sore.

Bear up in anguish, ease will yet be
sweet ;

Bear up all day, for night has
rest in store :

Christ bears thy burden with thee,
rise and greet

One sorrow more.

Before 1886.

‘ Then shall ye shout.’

It seems an easy thing
Mayhap one day to sing ;
Yet the next day
We cannot sing or say.

Keep silence with good heart,
While silence fits our part :
Another day
We shall both sing and say.

Keep silence, counting time
To strike in at the chime :
Prepare to sound,—
Our part is coming round.

Can we not sing or say?
In silence let us pray,
And meditate
Our love-song while we wait.
Before 1886.

EVERYTHING that is born must die ;
Everything that can sigh may
sing ;
Rocks in equal balance, low or high,
Everything.

Honeycomb is weighed against a
sting ;
Hope and fear take turns to touch
the sky ;
Height and depth respond alter-
nating.

O my soul, spread wings of love to
fly,
Wings of dove that soars on
home-bound wing :
Love trusts Love, till Love shall
justify
Everything.
Before 1886.

LORD, grant us calm, if calm can
set forth Thee ;
Or tempest, if a tempest set Thee
forth ;
Wind from the east or west or
south or north,
Or congelation of a silent sea,
With stillness of each tremulous
aspen tree.

Still let fruit fall, or hang upon the
tree ;
Still let the east and west, the
south and north,

Curb in their winds, or plough a
thundering sea ;
Still let the earth abide to set
Thee forth,
Or vanish like a smoke to set forth
Thee.
Before 1893.

Changing Chimes.

IT was not warning that our fathers
lacked,
It is not warning that we lack
to-day.
The Voice that cried still cries :
'Rise up and act :
Watch alway,—watch and pray,
—watch alway,—
All men.'

Alas, if aught was lacked goodwill
was lacked ;
Alas, goodwill is what we lack
to-day.
O gracious Voice, grant grace that
all may act,
Watch and act,—watch and pray,
—watch alway.—
Amen.

Before 1893.

Thy Servant will go and fight with
this Philistine.

SORROW of saints is sorrow of a
day,
Gladness of saints is gladness
evermore :
Send on thy hope, send on thy
will before,
To chant God's praise along the
narrow way.
Stir up His praises if the flesh
would sway,

Exalt His praises if the world
 press sore,
 Peal out His praises if black
 Satan roar
 A hundred thousand lies to say
 them nay.
 Devil and Death and Hades, three-
 fold cord
 Not quickly broken, front thee to
 thy face ;
 Front thou them with a face of
 tenfold flint :
 Shout for the battle, David !
 never stint
 Body or breath or blood, but,
 proof in grace,
 Die for thy Lord, as once for thee
 thy Lord.

Before 1893.

THRO' burden and heat of the day
 How weary the hands and the
 feet
 That labour with scarcely a stay,
 Thro' burden and heat !

Tired toiler whose sleep shall be
 sweet,
 Kneel down, it will rest thee to pray :
 Then forward, for daylight is fleet.

Cool shadows show lengthening and
 grey,
 Cool twilight will soon be com-
 plete :

What matters this wearisome way
 Thro' burden and heat ?

Before 1886.

' Then I commended Mirth.'

' A MERRY heart is a continual
 feast.'

Then take we life and all things
 in good part :

To fast grows festive while we keep
 at least

A merry heart.

Well pleased with nature and well
 pleased with art ;
 A merry heart makes cheer for man
 and beast,
 And fancies music in a creaking
 cart.

Some day, a restful heart whose toils
 have ceased,

A heavenly heart gone home from
 earthly mart :

To-day, blow wind from west or
 wind from east,

A merry heart.

Before 1886.

SORROW hath a double voice,
 Sharp to-day but sweet to-morrow :
 Wait in patience, hope, rejoice,
 Tried friends of sorrow.

Pleasure hath a double taste,
 Sweet to-day but sharp to-morrow :
 Friends of pleasure, rise in haste,
 Make friends with sorrow.

Pleasure set aside to-day
 Comes again to rule to-morrow :
 Welcomed sorrow will not stay,
 Farewell to sorrow !

Before 1886.

SHADOWS to-day, while shadows
 show God's Will.

Light were not good except He
 sent us light.

Shadows to-day, because this day
 is night

Whose marvels and whose mysteries
fulfil

Their course and deep in darkness
serve Him still.

'Thou dim aurora, on the extremest
height

Of airy summits wax not over-
bright ;

Refrain thy rose, refrain thy daffo-
dil.

Until God's Word go forth to kindle
thee

And garland thee and bid thee
stoop to us,

Blush in the heavenly choirs
and glance not down :

To-day we race in darkness for
a crown,

In darkness for beatitude to be,
In darkness for the city luminous.

Before 1893.

Truly the Light is sweet.

LIGHT colourless doth colour all
things else :

Where light dwells pleasure dwells
And peace excels.

Then rise and shine,

Thou shadowed soul of mine,

And let a cheerful rainbow make
thee fine.

Light, fountain of all beauty and
delight,

Leads day forth from the night,

Turns blackness white.

Light waits for thee

Where all have eyes to see :

Oh well is thee, and happy shalt
thou be.

Before 1893.

Are ye not much better than they ?

THE twig sprouteth,

The moth outeth,

The plant springeth,

The bird singeth :

Tho' little we sing to-day

Yet are we better than they ;

Tho' growing with scarce a showing,

Yet, please God, we are growing.

The twig teacheth,

The moth preacheth,

The plant vaunteth,

The bird chanteth,

God's mercy overflowing,

Merciful past man's knowing.

Please God to keep us growing

Till the awful day of mowing.

Before 1893.

Yea, the sparrow hath found her an house.

WISEST of sparrows that sparrow
which sitteth alone

Perched on the housetop, its own
upper chamber, for nest ;

Wisest of swallows that swallow
which timely has flown

Over the turbulent sea to the land
of its rest :

Wisest of sparrows and swallows,
if I were as wise !

Wisest of spirits that spirit which
dwelleth apart

Hid in the Presence of God for a
chapel and nest,

Sending a wish and a will and a
passionate heart

Over the eddy of life to that
Presence in rest :

Seated alone and in peace till
God bids it arise.

Before 1893.

I am small and of no reputation.

THE least, if so I am ;

If so, less than the least,

May I reach heaven to glorify the
Lamb

And sit down at the Feast.

I fear and I am small,

Whence am I of good cheer ;

For I, who hear Thy call, have
heard Thee call

To Thee the small who fear.

Before 1893.

O CHRIST my God Who seest the
unseen,

O Christ my God Who knowest
the unknown,

Thy mighty Blood was poured
forth to atone

For every sin that can be or hath
been.

O Thou Who seest what I cannot
see,

Thou Who didst love us all so
long ago,

O Thou Who knowest what I
must not know,

Remember all my hope, remember
me.

Before 1886.

YEA, if Thou wilt, Thou canst put
up Thy sword ;

But what if Thou shouldst sheathe
it to the hilt

Within the heart that sues to Thee,
O Lord ?

Yea, if Thou wilt.

For if Thou wilt Thou canst purge
out the guilt

Of all, of any, even the most ab-
horred :

Thou canst pluck down, rebuild,
build up the unbuilt.

Who wanders canst Thou gather by
love's cord ?

Who sinks, uplift from the under-
sucking silt

To set him on Thy rock within Thy
ward ?

Yea, if Thou wilt.

Before 1886.

SWEETNESS of rest when Thou
sheddest rest,

Sweetness of patience till then ;

Only the Will of our God is best
For all the millions of men.

For all the millions on earth to-day,
On earth and under the earth ;

Waiting for earth to vanish away,
Waiting to come to the birth.

Before 1893.

O FOOLISH Soul! to make thy
count

For languid falls and much for-
given,

When like a flame thou mightest
mount

To storm and carry heaven.

A life so faint,—is this to live ?

A goal so mean,—is this a goal ?

Christ love thee, remedy, forgive,
Save thee, O foolish Soul,

Before 1893.

BEFORE the beginning Thou hast
foreknown the end,
Before the birthday the death-bed
was seen of Thee :

Cleanse what I cannot cleanse, mend
what I cannot mend,
O Lord All-Merciful, be merciful
to me.

While the end is drawing near I
know not mine end ;
Birth I recall not, my death I
cannot foresee :

O God, arise to defend, arise to
befriend,
O Lord All-Merciful, be merciful
to me.

Before 1893.

THE goal in sight ! Look up and
sing,
Set faces full against the light,
Welcome with rapturous welcoming
The goal in sight.

Let be the left, let be the right :
Straight forward make your footsteps
ring
A loud alarum thro' the night.

Death hunts you, yea, but reft of
sting ;
Your bed is green, your shroud
is white :
Hail Life and Death and all that
bring
The goal in sight.

Before 1886.

LOOKING back along life's trodden
way,
Gleams and greenness linger on
the track ;

R

Distance melts and mellows all
to-day,
Looking back.

Rose and purple and a silvery grey,
Is that cloud the cloud we called
so black ?

Evening harmonizes all to-day,
Looking back.

Foolish feet so prone to halt or stray,
Foolish heart so restive on the
rack !

Yesterday we sighed, but not to-day,
Looking back.

Before 1886.

THE WATCHERS

SHE fell asleep among the flowers
In the sober autumn hours.

Three there are about her bed,
At her side and feet and head.

At her head standeth the Cross
For which all else she counted loss :

Still and steadfast at her feet
Doth her Guardian Angel sit :

Prayers of truest love abide
Wrapping her on every side.

The holy Cross standeth alone,
Beneath the white moon, whitest
stone.

Evil spirits come not near
Its shadow, shielding from all fear :

Once she bore it in her breast,
Now it certifies her rest.

I.

Humble violets grow around
Its base, sweetening the grassy
ground,

Leaf-hidden : so she hid from praise
Of men her pious holy ways.

Higher about it, twining close,
Clingeth a crimson thorny rose :

So from her heart's good seed of love
Thorns sprang below, flowers spring
above.

Though yet his vigil doth not cease,
Her Angel sits in perfect peace,

With white folded wings : for she
He watches now is pure as he.

He watches with his loving eyes
For the day when she shall rise :

When full of glory and of grace
She shall behold him face to face.

Though she is safe for ever, yet
Human love doth not forget :

But prays that in her deep
Grave she may sleep a blessed sleep,

Till when time and the world are
past
She may find mercy at the last.

So these three do hedge her in
From sorrow, as death does from sin.

So freed from earthly taint and pain
May they all meet in heaven.
Amen.

25 May 1850.

THE THREE ENEMIES

THE FLESH

'SWEET, thou art pale.'

'More pale to see,
Christ hung upon the cruel tree
And bore His Father's wrath for me.'

'Sweet, thou art sad.'

'Beneath a rod
More heavy, Christ for my sake trod
The winepress of the wrath of God.'

'Sweet, thou art weary.'

'Not so Christ ;
Whose mighty love of me sufficed
For Strength, Salvation, Eucharist.'

'Sweet, thou art footsore.'

'If I bleed,
His feet have bled ; yea in my need
His Heart once bled for mine indeed.'

THE WORLD

'Sweet, thou art young.'

'So He was young
Who for my sake in silence hung
Upon the Cross with Passion wrung.'

'Look, thou art fair.'

'He was more fair
Than men, Who deigned for me to
wear
A visage marred beyond compare.'

'And thou hast riches.'

'Daily bread :
All else is His : Who, living, dead,
For me lacked where to lay His
Head.'

'And life is sweet.'

'It was not so
To Him, Whose Cup did overflow
With mine unutterable woe.'

THE DEVIL

'Thou drinkest deep.'

'When Christ would sup
He drained the dregs from out my
cup:

So how should I be lifted up?'

'Thou shalt win Glory.'

'In the skies,
Lord Jesus, cover up mine eyes
Lest they should look on vanities.'

'Thou shalt have Knowledge.'

'Helpless dust!
In thee, O Lord, I put my trust:
Answer Thou for me, Wise and Just.'

'And Might.'—

'Get thee behind me. Lord,
Who hast redeemed and not abhorred
My soul, oh keep it by Thy Word.'

15 June 1851.

BEHOLD, I STAND AT THE
DOOR AND KNOCK

WHO standeth at the gate?—A
woman old,

A widow from the husband of her
love.

'O lady, stay, this wind is piercing
cold,

Oh look at the keen frosty moon
above;

I have no home, am hungry, feeble,
poor.'—

'I'm really very sorry, but I can
Do nothing for you; there's the
clergyman,'

The lady said, and shivering closed
the door.

Who standeth at the gate?—Way-
worn and pale

A grey-haired man asks charity
again.

'Kind lady, I have journeyed far,
and fail

Through weariness; for I have
begged in vain

Some shelter, and can find no
lodging-place.'—

She answered: 'There's the work-
house very near;

Go, for they'll certainly receive
you there'—

Then shut the door against his
pleading face.

Who standeth at the gate?—A
stunted child,

Her sunk eyes sharpened with
precocious care.

'O lady, save me from a home
defiled,

From shameful sights and sounds
that taint the air:

Take pity on me, teach me some-
thing good.'—

'For shame, why don't you work
instead of cry?

I keep no young impostors here,
not I.'

She slammed the door, indignant
where she stood.

Who standeth at the gate, and will
be heard?

Arise, O woman, from thy comforts
now:

Go forth again to speak the careless
word,

The cruel word unjust, with
hardened brow.

But who is this, that standeth not to
pray

As once, but terrible to judge thy
sin ?

This whom thou wouldst not suc-
cour nor take in
Nor teach but leave to perish by the
way.

'Thou didst it not unto the least of
these,

And in them hast not done it unto
Me.

Thou wast as a princess rich and at
ease—

Now sit in dust and howl for
poverty.

Three times I stood beseeching at
thy gate,

Three times I came to bless thy
soul and save :

But now I come to judge for what
I gave,

And now at length thy sorrow is too
late.'

1 December 1851.

ADVENT

'COME,' Thou dost say to Angels,
To blessed Spirits, 'Come' :

'Come,' to the lambs of Thine own
flock,

Thy little ones, 'Come home.'

'Come,' from the many-mansioned
house

The gracious word is sent ;

'Come,' from the ivory palaces
Unto the Penitent.

O Lord, restore us deaf and blind,

Unclose our lips though dumb :

Then say to us, 'I come with speed,'
And we will answer, 'Come.'

12 December 1851.

ALL SAINTS

THEY have brought gold and spices
to my King,

Incense and precious stuffs and
ivory :

O holy Mother mine, what can I
bring

That so my Lord may deign to
look on me ?

They sing a sweeter song than I can
sing,

All crowned and glorified ex-
ceedingly :

I, bound on earth, weep for my tres-
passing,—

They sing the song of love in
heaven, set free.

Then answered me my Mother, and
her voice

Spake to my heart, yea answered
in my heart :

'Sing, saith He to the heavens, to
earth, Rejoice :

Thou also lift thy heart to Him
above :

He seeks not thine, but thee such
as thou art,

For lo His banner over thee is Love.'

20 January 1852.

EYE HATH NOT SEEN

OUR feet shall tread upon the stars—
Less bright than we.

The everlasting shore shall bound
A fairer sea

Than that which cold

Now glitters in the sun like gold.

Oh good, oh blest ! but who shall say
How fair, how fair,

Is the light-region where no cloud
 Darkens the air,
 Where weary eyes
 Rest on the green of Paradise?

There cometh not the wind nor rain
 Nor sun nor snow :
 The Trees of Knowledge and of
 Life

Bud there and blow,
 Their leaves and fruit
 Fed from an undecaying root.

There Angels flying to and fro
 Are not more white
 Than Penitents some while ago,
 Now Saints in light :
 Once soiled and sad—
 Cleansed now and crowned, fulfilled
 and glad.

Now yearning through the perfect
 rest
 Perhaps they gaze
 Earthwards upon their best-beloved
 In all earth's ways :
 Longing, but not
 With pain, as used to be their lot.

The hush of that beatitude
 Is ages long,
 Sufficing Virgins, Prophets, Saints,
 Till the new song
 Shall be sent up
 From lips which drained the bitter
 cup.

If but the thought of Paradise
 Gives joy on earth,
 What shall it be to enter there
 Through second birth?
 To find once more
 Our dearest treasure gone before?

To find the Shepherd of the sheep,
 The Lamb once slain,
 Who leads His own by living
 streams—
 Never again
 To thirst, or need
 Aught in green pastures where they
 feed.

But from the altar comes a cry
 Awful and strong
 From martyred Saints : 'How long,'
 they say,
 'O Lord, how long,
 Holy and True,
 Shall vengeance for our blood be
 due?'

Then the Lord gives them robes of
 white,
 And bids them stay
 In patience till the time be full
 For the last day—
 The day of dread
 When the last sentence shall be
 said ;

When heaven and earth shall flee
 away,
 And the great deep
 Shall render up her dead, and earth
 Her sons that sleep,
 And day of grace
 Be hid for ever from Thy face.

Oh hide us, till Thy wrath be past,
 Our grief, our shame,
 With Peter and with Magdalene,
 And him whose name
 No record tells
 Who by Thy promise with Thee
 dwells.

A BRUISED REED SHALL HE NOT BREAK

I WILL accept thy will to do and be,
Thy hatred and intolerance of sin,
Thy will at least to love, that burns
within

And thirsteth after Me :

So will I render fruitful, blessing still,
The germs and small beginnings
in thy heart,

Because thy will cleaves to the
better part.—

Alas, I cannot will.

Dost not thou will, poor soul? Yet
I receive

The inner unseen longings of the
soul,

I guide them turning towards Me ;
I control

And charm hearts till they
grieve :

If thou desire, it yet shall come to pass,
Though thou but wish indeed to
choose My love ;

For I have power in earth and
heaven above.—

I cannot wish, alas !

What, neither choose nor wish to
choose ? and yet

I still must strive to win thee and
constrain :

For thee I hung upon the cross
in pain,

How then can I forget ?

If thou as yet dost neither love nor
hate

Nor choose nor wish, — resign
thyself, be still,

Till I infuse love, hatred, longing,
will.—

I do not deprecate.

13 June 1852.

ST. ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

WHEN if ever life is sweet,
Save in heart in all a child,
A fair virgin undefiled,
Knelt she at her Saviour's feet :
While she laid her royal crown,
Thinking it too mean a thing
For a solemn offering,
Careless on the cushions down.

Fair she was as any rose,
But more pale than lilies white :
Her eyes full of deep repose
Seemed to see beyond our sight.
Hush, she is a holy thing :
Hush, her soul is in her eyes,
Seeking far in Paradise
For her Light, her Love, her King.

16 June 1852.

MOONSHINE

FAIR the sun riseth,
Bright as bright can be,
Fair the sun shineth
On a fair fair sea.

‘ Across the water
Wilt thou come with me,
Miles and long miles, love,
Over the salt sea ? ’

‘ If thou wilt hold me
Truly by the hand,
I will go with thee
Over sea and sand.

‘ If thou wilt hold me
That I shall not fall,
I will go with thee,
Love, in spite of all.’

Fair the moon riseth
On her heavenly way,
Making the waters
Fairer than by day.

A little vessel
Rocks upon the sea,
Where stands a maiden
Fair as fair can be.

Her smile rejoices
Though her mouth is mute :
She treads the vessel
With her little foot.

Truly he holds her
Faithful to his pledge,
Guiding the vessel
From the water's edge.

Fair the moon saileth
With her pale fair light,
Fair the girl gazeth
Out into the night.

Saith she, 'Like silver
Shines thy hair, not gold':
Saith she, 'I shiver
In thy steady hold.

'Love,' she saith weeping,
'Loose thy hold awhile ;
My heart is freezing
In thy freezing smile.'

The moon is hidden
By a silver cloud,
Fair as a halo
Or a maiden's shroud.

No more beseeching,
Ever on they go :
The vessel rocketh
Softly to and fro :

And still he holds her
That she shall not fall,
Till pale mists whiten
Dimly over all.

Onward and onward,
Far across the sea :
Onward and onward,
Pale as pale can be :

Onward and onward,
Ever hand in hand,
From sun and moonlight
To another land.

16 June 1852.

I LOOK FOR THE LORD

OUR wealth has wasted all away,
Our pleasures have found wings ;
The night is long until the day ;
Lord, give us better things—
A ray of light in thirsty night
And secret water-springs.

Our love is dead, or sleeps, or else
Is hidden from our eyes :
Our silent love, while no man tells
Or if it lives or dies.
Oh give us love, O Lord, above
In changeless Paradise.

Our house is left us desolate,
Even as Thy word hath said.
Before our face the way is great ;
Around us are the dead.
Oh guide us, save us from the grave,
As Thou Thy saints hast led.

Lead us where pleasures evermore
And wealth indeed are placed,

And home on an eternal shore,
 And love that cannot waste :
 Where joy Thou art unto the heart,
 And sweetness to the taste.

28 September 1852.

THE HEART KNOWETH ITS OWN BITTERNESS

WEEP yet awhile,—
 Weep till that day shall dawn
 when thou shalt smile :
 Watch till the day
 When all save only love shall pass
 away.

Weep, sick and lonely,
 Bow thy heart to tears,
 For none shall guess the secret
 Of thy griefs and fears.
 Weep, till the day dawn,
 Refreshing dew :
 Weep till the spring :
 For genial showers
 Bring up the flowers,
 And thou shalt sing
 In summertime of blossoming.

Heart-sick and silent,
 Weep and watch in pain.
 Weep for hope perished,
 Not to live again :
 Weep for love's hope and fear
 And passion vain.
 Watch till the day
 When all save only love shall pass
 away.

Then love rejoicing
 Shall forget to weep :
 Shall hope or fear no more,
 Or watch, or sleep,

But only love and cease not,
 Deep beyond deep.
 Now we sow love in tears,
 But then shall reap.
 Have patience as the Lord's own
 flock of sheep :
 Have patience with His love
 Who died below, who lives for thee
 above.

23 December 1852.

WHITSUN EVE

THE white dove cooeth in her downy
 nest,
 Keeping her young ones warm be-
 neath her breast :
 The white moon saileth through the
 cool clear sky,
 Screened by a tender mist in passing
 by :
 The white rose buds, with thorns
 upon its stem,
 All the more precious and more dear
 for them :
 The stream shines silver in the tufted
 grass,
 The white clouds scarcely dim it as
 they pass ;
 Deep in the valleys lily cups are
 white,
 They send up incense all the holy
 night.
 Our souls are white, made clean in
 Blood once shed :
 White blessed Angels watch around
 our bed :—
 O spotless Lamb of God, still keep
 us so,
 Thou who wert born for us in time
 of snow.

18 May 1853.

THERE REMAINETH
THEREFORE A REST FOR
THE PEOPLE OF GOD

I

'Ye have forgotten the exhortation.'

COME, blessed sleep, most full, most
perfect, come :

Come, sleep, if so I may forget
the whole ;

Forget my body and forget my
soul,

Forget how long life is and trouble-
some.

Come, happy sleep, to soothe my
heart or numb,

Arrest my weary spirit or control :

Till light be dark to me from pole
to pole,

And winds and echoes and low songs
be dumb.

Come, sleep, and lap me into perfect
calm,

Lap me from all the world and
weariness :

Come, secret sleep, with thine un-
uttered psalm,

Safe sheltering in a hidden cool
recess :

Come, heavy dreamless sleep, and
close and press

Upon mine eyes thy fingers dropping
balm.

II

'Which speaketh unto you as unto
children.

ART thou so weary then, poor thirsty
soul ?

Have patience, in due season thou
shalt sleep.

Mount yet a little while, the path
is steep :

Strain yet a little while to reach the
goal :

Do battle with thyself, achieve,
control :

Till night come down with blessed
slumber deep

As love, and seal thine eyes no
more to weep

Through long tired vigils while the
planets roll.

Have patience, for thou too shalt
sleep at length,

Lapt in the pleasant shade of
Paradise.

My Hands that bled for thee
shall close thine eyes,

My Heart that bled for thee shall
be thy rest :

I will sustain with everlasting
strength,

And thou, with John, shalt lie
upon My breast.

12 July 1853.

A HARVEST

O GATE of death, of the blessed
night,

That shall open not again

On this world of shame and sorrow,

Where slow ages wax and wane,

Where are signs and seasons, days
and nights,

And mighty winds and rain.

Is the day wearing toward the
west ?—

Far off cool shadows pass,

A visible refreshment

Across the sultry grass :

Far off low mists are mustering,

A broken shifting mass.

Still in the deepest knowledge
 Some depth is left unknown :
 Still in the merriest music lurks
 A plaintive undertone :
 Still with the closest friend some
 thro'ß
 Of life is felt alone.

Time's summer breath is sweet, his
 sands
 Ebb sparkling as they flow,
 Yet some are sick that this should
 end
 Which is from long ago :—
 Are not the fields already white
 To harvest in the glow ?—

There shall come another harvest
 Than was in days of yore :
 The reapers shall be Angels,
 Our God shall purge the floor :—
 No more seed-time, no more harvest,
 Then for evermore.

1 August 1853.

THE ELEVENTH HOUR

FAINT and worn and aged
 One stands knocking at a gate ;
 Though no light shines in the case-
 ment,
 Knocking though so late.
 It has struck eleven
 In the courts of heaven,
 Yet he still doth knock and wait.

While no answer cometh
 From the heavenly hill,
 Blessed Angels wonder
 At his earnest will.
 Hope and fear but quicken
 While the shadows thicken :
 He is knocking, knocking still.

Grim the gate unopened
 Stands with bar and lock :
 Yet within the unseen Porter
 Harkens to the knock.—
 Doing and undoing,
 Faint and yet pursuing,
 This man's feet are on the Rock.

With a cry unceasing
 Knocketh, prayeth he :
 ' Lord have mercy on me
 When I cry to Thee.'
 With a knock unceasing
 And a cry increasing :
 ' O my Lord, remember me.'

Still the Porter standeth,
 Love-constrained He standeth near,
 While the cry increaseth
 Of that love and fear :
 ' Jesus, look upon me—
 Christ, hast Thou foregone me?—
 If I must, I perish here.'

Faint the knocking ceases,
 Faint the cry and call :
 Is he lost indeed for ever,
 Shut without the wall ?
 Mighty Arms surround him,
 Arms that sought and found him,
 Held, withheld, and bore through all.

O celestial mansion,
 Open wide the door :
 Crown and robes of whiteness,
 Stone inscribed before,
 Flocking Angels bear them ;
 Stretch thy hand and wear them,
 Sit thou down for evermore.

5 September 1853.

SLEEP AT SEA

SOUND the deep waters :—
 Who shall sound that deep ?—

Too short the plummet,
 And the watchmen sleep.
 Some dream of effort
 Up a toilsome steep ;
 Some dream of pasture grounds
 For harmless sheep.

White shapes flit to and fro
 From mast to mast ;
 They feel the distant tempest
 That nears them fast :
 Great rocks are straight ahead,
 Great shoals not past ;
 They shout to one another
 Upon the blast.

Oh soft the streams drop music
 Between the hills,
 And musical the birds' nests
 Beside those rills :
 The nests are types of home
 Love-hidden from ills,
 The nests are types of spirits
 Love-music fills.

So dream the sleepers,
 Each man in his place ;
 The lightning shows the smile
 Upon each face :
 The ship is driving,—driving,—
 It drives apace :
 And sleepers smile, and spirits
 Bewail their case.

The lightning glares and reddens
 Across the skies ;
 It seems but sunset
 To those sleeping eyes.
 When did the sun go down
 On such a wise ?
 From such a sunset
 When shall day arise ?

'Wake,' call the spirits :
 But to heedless ears :
 They have forgotten sorrows
 And hopes and fears ;
 They have forgotten perils
 And smiles and tears ;
 Their dream has held them long,
 Long years and years.

'Wake,' call the spirits again :
 But it would take
 A louder summons
 To bid them awake.
 Some dream of pleasure
 For another's sake :
 Some dream, forgetful
 Of a lifelong ache.

One by one slowly,
 Ah how sad and slow !
 Wailing and praying
 The spirits rise and go :
 Clear stainless spirits,
 White, as white as snow ;
 Pale spirits, wailing
 For an overthrow.

One by one flitting,
 Like a mournful bird
 Whose song is tired at last
 For no mate heard.
 The loving voice is silent,
 The useless word ;
 One by one flitting
 Sick with hope deferred.

Driving and driving,
 The ship drives amain :
 While swift from mast to mast
 Shapes flit again,
 Flit silent as the silence
 Where men lie slain ;
 Their shadow cast upon the sails
 Is like a stain.

No voice to call the sleepers,
 No hand to raise :
 They sleep to death in dreaming
 Of length of days.
 Vanity of vanities,
 The Preacher says :
 Vanity is the end
 Of all their ways.

17 October 1853.

CONSIDER THE LILIES OF THE FIELD

FLOWERS preach to us if we will
 hear : —

The rose saith in the dewy morn :
 'I am most fair ;
 Yet all my loveliness is born
 Upon a thorn.'
 The poppy saith amid the corn :
 'Let but my scarlet head appear
 And I am held in scorn ;
 Yet juice of subtle virtue lies
 Within my cup of curious dyes.'
 The lilies say : 'Behold how we
 Preach without words of purity.'
 The violets whisper from the shade
 Which their own leaves have made :
 'Men scent our fragrance on the
 air,

Yet take no heed
 Of humble lessons we would read.'

But not alone the fairest flowers :
 The merest grass
 Along the roadside where we pass,
 Lichen and moss and sturdy weed,
 Tell of His love who sends the
 dew,
 The rain and sunshine too,
 To nourish one small seed.

21 October 1853.

WHO HAVE A FORM OF GODLINESS

WHEN I am sick and tired it is
 God's will :

Also God's will alone is sure and
 best :—

So in my weariness I find my
 rest,

And so in poverty I take my fill.

Therefore I see my good in midst
 of ill,

Therefore in loneliness I build my
 nest,

And through hot noon pant toward
 the shady west,

And hope in sickening disappoint-
 ment still.

So, when the times of restitution
 come,

The sweet times of refreshing
 come at last,

My God shall fill my longings
 to the brim :

Therefore I wait and look and
 long for Him :

Not wearied though the work is
 wearisome,

Nor fainting though the time be
 almost past.

18 December 1853.

SOME FEASTS AND FASTS

(From 1853 to 1893.)

ADVENT SUNDAY

BEHOLD, the Bridegroom cometh :
 go ye out

With lighted lamps and garlands
 round about

To meet Him in a rapture with a
 shout.

It may be at the midnight, black as
pitch,
Earth shall cast up her poor, cast
up her rich.

It may be at the crowing of the
cock
Earth shall upheave her depth,
uproot her rock.

For lo, the Bridegroom fetcheth
home the Bride :
His Hands are Hands she knows,
she knows His Side.

Like pure Rebekah at the appointed
place,
Veiled, she unveils her face to meet
His Face.

Like great Queen Esther in her
triumphing,
She triumphs in the Presence of her
King.

His Eyes are as a Dove's, and she's
Dove-eyed ;
He knows His lovely mirror, sister,
Bride.

He speaks with Dove-voice of ex-
ceeding love,
And she with love-voice of an
answering Dove.

Behold, the Bridegroom cometh :
go we out
With lamps ablaze and garlands
round about
To meet Him in a rapture with a
shout.

Before 1886.

ADVENT.

EARTH grown old, yet still so green,
Deep beneath her crust of
cold

Nurses fire unfelt, unseen :
Earth grown old.

We who live are quickly
told :

Millions more lie hid between
Inner swathings of her fold.

When will fire break up her screen ?
When will life burst thro' her
mould ?

Earth, earth, earth, thy cold is keen,
Earth grown old.

Before 1886.

SOONER or later : yet at last
The Jordan must be past ;

It may be he will overflow
His banks the day we go ;

It may be that his cloven deep
Will stand up on a heap.

Sooner or later : yet one day
We all must pass that way ;

Each man, each woman, humbled,
pale,
Pass veiled within the veil ;

Child, parent, bride, companion,
Alone, alone, alone.

For none a ransom can be paid,
A suretyship be made :

I, bent by mine own burden, must
Enter my house of dust ;

I, rated to the full amount,
Must render mine account.

When earth and sea shall empty all
Their graves of great and small ;

When earth wrapt in a fiery flood
Shall no more hide her blood ;

When mysteries shall be revealed ;
All secrets be unsealed ;

When things of night, when things
of shame,
Shall find at last a name,

Pealed for a hissing and a curse
Throughout the universe :

Then, Awful Judge, most Awful God,
Then cause to bud Thy rod,

To bloom with blossoms, and to give
Almonds ; yea, bid us live.

I plead Thyself with Thee, I plead
Thee in our utter need :

Jesus, most Merciful of Men,
Show mercy on us then ;

Lord God of Mercy and of men,
Show mercy on us then.

Circa 1877.

CHRISTMAS EVE

CHRISTMAS hath a darkness
Brighter than the blazing noon,
Christmas hath a chillness
Warmer than the heat of June,
Christmas hath a beauty
Lovelier than the world can show :
For Christmas bringeth Jesus,
Brought for us so low.

Earth, strike up your music,
Birds that sing and bells that ring ;
Heaven hath answering music
For all Angels soon to sing :
Earth, put on your whitest
Bridal robe of spotless snow :
For Christmas bringeth Jesus,
Brought for us so low.

Before 1886.

CHRISTMAS DAY

A BABY is a harmless thing
And wins our hearts with one
accord,
And Flower of Babies was their
King,
Jesus Christ our Lord :
Lily of lilies He
Upon His Mother's knee ;
Rose of roses, soon to be
Crowned with thorns on leafless
tree.

A lamb is innocent and mild
And merry on the soft green sod ;
And Jesus Christ, the Undeiled,
Is the Lamb of God :
Only spotless He
Upon his Mother's knee ;
White and ruddy, soon to be
Sacrificed for you and me.

Nay, lamb is not so sweet a word,
Nor lily half so pure a name ;
Another name our hearts hath stirred,
Kindling them to flame :
'Jesus' certainly
Is music and melody :
Heart with heart in harmony
Carol we and worship we.

Before 1886.

CHRISTMASTIDE

LOVE came down at Christmas,
 Love all lovely, Love Divine ;
 Love was born at Christmas,
 Star and Angels gave the sign.

Worship we the Godhead,
 Love Incarnate, Love Divine ;
 Worship we our Jesus :
 But wherewith for sacred sign ?

Love shall be our token,
 Love be yours and love be mine,
 Love to God and all men,
 Love for plea and gift and sign.
Before 1886.

ST. JOHN, APOSTLE

EARTH cannot bar flame from
 ascending,
 Hell cannot bind light from descend-
 ing,
 Death cannot finish life never ending.

Eagle and sun gaze at each other,
 Eagle at sun, brother at Brother,
 Loving in peace and joy one another.

O St. John, with chains for thy wages,
 Strong thy rock where the storm-
 blast rages,
 Rock of refuge, the Rock of Ages.

Rome hath passed with her awful
 voice,
 Earth is passing with all her joys,
 Heaven shall pass away with a noise.

So from us all follies that please us,
 So from us all falsehoods that ease
 us,—
 Only all saints abide with their
 Jesus.

Jesus, in love looking down hither,
 Jesus, by love draw us up thither,
 That we in Thee may abide to-
 gether.

Before 1893.

‘BELOVED, let us love one another,’
 says St. John,
 Eagle of eagles calling from
 above :

Words of strong nourishment for
 life to feed upon,
 ‘Beloved, let us love.’

Voice of an eagle, yea, Voice of
 the Dove :
 If we may love, winter is past and
 gone ;
 Publish we, praise we, for lo it is
 enough.

More sunny than sunshine that ever
 yet shone,
 Sweetener of the bitter, smoother
 of the rough,
 Highest lesson of all lessons for all
 to con,
 ‘Beloved, let us love.’

Before 1886.

HOLY INNOCENTS

THEY scarcely waked before they
 slept,
 They scarcely wept before they
 laughed ;
 They drank indeed death’s bitter
 draught,
 But all its bitterest dregs were
 kept
 And drained by Mothers while they
 wept.

From Heaven the speechless Infants
speak :

Weep not (they say), our Mothers
dear,

For swords nor sorrows come
not here.

Now we are strong who were so
weak,

And all is ours we could not seek.

We bloom among the blooming
flowers,

We sing among the singing
birds ;

Wisdom we have who wanted
words :

Here morning knows not evening
hours,

All's rainbow here without the
showers.

And softer than our Mother's breast,
And closer than our Mother's
arm,

Is here the Love that keeps us
warm

And broods above our happy nest.

Dear Mothers, come : for Heaven
is best.

Circa 1877.

UNSPOTTED lambs to follow the
one Lamb,

Unspotted doves to wait on the
one Dove ;

To whom Love saith, ' Be with Me
where I am,'

And lo their answer unto Love is
love.

For tho' I know not any note they
know,

Nor know one word of all their
song above,

I know Love speaks to them, and
even so

I know the answer unto Love is
love.

Before 1893.

EPIPHANY

' LORD Babe, if Thou art He

We sought for patiently,

Where is Thy court ?

Hither may prophecy and star
resort ;

Men heed not their report.'—

' Bow down and worship, righteous
man :

This Infant of a span

Is He man sought for since the
world began !'—

' Then, Lord, accept my gold, too
base a thing

For Thee, of all kings King.'—

' Lord Babe, despite Thy youth

I hold Thee of a truth

Both Good and Great :

But wherefore dost Thou keep so
mean a state,

Low-lying desolate ?'—

' Bow down and worship, righteous
seer :

The Lord our God is here

Approachable, Who bids us all
draw near.'—

' Wherefore to Thee I offer frank-
incense,

Thou Sole Omnipotence.'—

' But I have only brought

Myrrh ; no wise afterthought

Instructed me

To gather pearls or gems, or choice
to see

Coral or ivory.'—

'Not least thine offering proves
thee wise :

For myrrh means sacrifice,
And He that lives, this Same is
He that dies.'—

'Then here is myrrh : alas, yea
woe is me

That myrrh befitteth Thee.'—

Myrrh, frankincense, and gold :

And lo from wintry fold

Good-will doth bring

A Lamb, the innocent likeness of
this King

Whom stars and seraphs sing :

And lo the bird of love, a Dove,

Flutters and coos above :

And Dove and Lamb and Babe
agree in love :—

Come all mankind, come all creation
hither,

Come, worship Christ together.

Before 1886.

EPIPHANYTIDE

TREMBLING before Thee we fall
down to adore Thee,

Shamefaced and trembling we
lift our eyes to Thee :

O First and with the last ! annul
our ruined past,

Rebuild us to Thy glory, set us
free

From sin and from sorrow to fall
down and worship Thee.

Full of pity view us, stretch Thy
sceptre to us,

Bid us live that we may give
ourselves to Thee :

O faithful Lord and true ! stand
up for us and do,

R

Make us lovely, make us new,
set us free—

Heart and soul and spirit—to
bring all and worship Thee.

Before 1893.

SEPTUAGESIMA

'So run that ye may obtain.'

ONE step more, and the race is ended ;

One word more, and the lesson's
done ;

One toil more, and a long rest follows
At set of sun.

Who would fail, for one step with-
holden ?

Who would fail, for one word un-
said ?

Who would fail, for a pause too early ?
Sound sleep the dead.

One step more, and the goal receives
us ;

One word more, and life's task is
done ;

One toil more, and the Cross is
carried

And sets the sun.

Before 1886.

SEXAGESIMA

'Cursed is the ground for thy sake.'

YET earth was very good in days of
old,

And earth is lovely still :

Still for the sacred flock she spreads
the fold,

For Sion rears the hill.

Mother she is and cradle of our race,

A depth where treasures lie,

The broad foundation of a holy place,

Man's step to scale the sky.

M

She spreads the harvest-field which
 Angels reap,
 And to the crop is white ;
 She spreads God's Acre where the
 happy sleep
 All night that is not night.

Earth may not pass till heaven shall
 pass away,
 Nor heaven may be renewed
 Except with earth : and once more
 in that day
 Earth shall be very good.
Before 1893.

THAT Eden of earth's sunrise cannot
 vie
 With Paradise beyond her sunset sky
 Hidden on high.

Four rivers watered Eden in her
 bliss,
 But Paradise hath One which perfect
 is
 In sweetesses.

Eden had gold, but Paradise hath
 gold
 Like unto glass of splendours mani-
 fold
 Tongue hath not told.

Eden had sun and moon to make
 her bright ;
 But Paradise hath God and Lamb
 for light,
 And hath no night.

Unspotted innocence was Eden's
 best ;
 Great Paradise shows God's fulfilled
 behest,
 Triumph and rest.

Hail, Eve and Adam, source of death
 and shame !
 New life has sprung from death, and
 Jesu's Name
 Clothes you with fame.

Hail Adam, and hail Eve ! your
 children rise
 And call you blessed, in their glad
 surmise
 Of Paradise.

Before 1893.

QUINQUAGESIMA

LOVE is alone the worthy law of love :
 All other laws have presupposed
 a taint :
 Love is the law from kindled saint
 to saint,
 From lamb to lamb, from dove to
 answering dove.

Love is the motive of all things that
 move
 Harmonious by free will without
 constraint :
 Love learns and teaches : love
 shall man acquaint
 With all he lacks, which all his lack
 is love.

Because Love is the fountain, I
 discern
 The stream as love : for what but
 love should flow
 From fountain Love ? not bitter
 from the sweet !
 I ignorant, have I laid claim to
 know ?
 Oh teach me, Love, such know-
 ledge as is meet
 For one to know who is fain to love
 and learn.

Before 1893.

PITEOUS my rhyme is
 What while I muse of love and pain,
 Of love mis-spent, of love in vain,
 Of love that is not loved again :
 And is this all then ?
 As long as time is,
 Love loveth. Time is but a span,
 The dalliance space of dying man :
 And is this all immortals can ?
 The gain were small then.

Love loves for ever,
 And finds a sort of joy in pain,
 And gives with nought to take again,
 And loves too well to end in vain :
 Is the gain small then ?
 Love laughs at 'never,'
 Outlives our life, exceeds the span
 Appointed to mere mortal man :
 All which love is and does and can
 Is all in all then.
Before 1886.

ASH WEDNESDAY

My God, my God, have mercy on
 my sin,
 For it is great ; and if I should begin
 To tell it all, the day would be too
 small
 To tell it in.

My God, Thou wilt have mercy on
 my sin
 For Thy Love's sake : yea, if I should
 begin
 To tell This all, the day would be
 too small
 To tell it in.
Before 1886.

GOOD Lord, to-day
 I scarce find breath to say :

Scourge, but receive me.
 For stripes are hard to bear, but
 worse
 Thy intolerable curse ;
 So do not leave me.

Good Lord, lean down
 In pity, tho' Thou frown ;
 Smite, but retrieve me :
 For so Thou hold me up to stand
 And kiss Thy smiting hand,
 It less will grieve me.
Before 1893.

LENT

It is good to be last not first,
 Pending the present distress ;
 It is good to hunger and thirst,
 So it be for righteousness.
 It is good to spend and be spent,
 It is good to watch and to pray :
 Life and Death make a goodly Lent
 So it leads us to Easter Day.
Before 1886.

EMBERTIDE

I SAW a Saint.—How canst thou
 tell that he
 Thou sawest was a Saint?—
 I saw one like to Christ so lumin-
 ously
 By patient deeds of love, his
 mortal taint
 Seemed made his groundwork for
 humility.

And when he marked me downcast
 utterly
 Where foul I sat and faint,
 Then more than ever Christ-like
 kindled he ;
 And welcomed me as I had been
 a saint,
 Tenderly stooping low to comfort me.

Christ bade him, 'Do thou likewise.'
 Wherefore he
 Waxed zealous to acquaint
 His soul with sin and sorrow, if so
 be
 He might retrieve some latent
 saint :—
 'Lo, I, with the child God hath
 given to me !'

Before 1893.

MID-LENT

Is any grieved or tired? Yea, by
 God's Will :
 Surely God's Will alone is good
 and best :
 O weary man, in weariness take
 rest,
 O hungry man, by hunger feast thy
 fill.
 Discern thy good beneath a mask of
 ill,
 Or build of loneliness thy secret
 nest :
 At noon take heart, being mind-
 ful of the west ;
 At night wake hope, for dawn ad-
 vances still.
 At night wake hope. Poor soul, in
 such sore need
 Of wakening and of girding up
 anew,
 Hast thou that hope which faint-
 ing doth pursue ?
 No saint but hath pursued and
 hath been faint ;
 Bid love wake hope, for both thy
 steps shall speed,
 Still faint yet still pursuing, O
 thou saint.

Before 1886.

PASSIONTIDE

IT is the greatness of Thy love, dear
 Lord, that we would celebrate
 With sevenfold powers.
 Our love at best is cold and poor, at
 best unseemly for Thy state,
 This best of ours.
 Creatures that die, we yet are such
 as Thine own hands deigned
 to create :
 We frail as flowers,
 We bitter bondslaves ransomed at a
 price incomparably great
 To grace Heaven's bowers.
 Thou callest : 'Come at once'—and
 still Thou callest us : 'Come
 late, tho' late'—
 (The moments fly)—
 'Come, every one that thirsteth,
 come—Come prove Me,
 knocking at My gate'—
 (Some souls draw nigh !)—
 'Come thou who waiting seekest
 Me—Come thou for whom
 I seek and wait'—
 (Why will we die?)—
 'Come and repent : come and
 amend : come joy the joys
 unsatiate'—
 —(Christ passeth by . . .)—
 Lord, pass not by—I come—
 and I—and I. Amen.

Before 1893.

PALM SUNDAY

'He treadeth the winepress of the fierce-
 ness and wrath of Almighty God.'
 I LIFT mine eyes, and see
 Thee, tender Lord, in pain upon the
 tree,
 Athirst for my sake and athirst for
 me.

'Yea, look upon Me there,
Compass'd with thorns and bleeding
everywhere,
For thy sake bearing all, and glad
to bear.'

I lift my heart to pray :
Thou Who didst love me all that
darkened day,
Wilt Thou not love me to the end
always ?

'Yea, thee My wandering sheep,
Yea, thee My scarlet sinner slow to
weep,
Come to Me, I will love thee and
will keep.'

Yet am I racked with fear :
Behold the unending outer darkness
drear,
Behold the gulf unbridgeable and
near !

'Nay, fix thy heart, thine eyes,
Thy hope upon My boundless sacri-
fice :
Will I lose lightly one so dear-
bought prize ?'

Ah Lord, it is not Thou,
Thou that wilt fail ; yet woe is me,
for how
Shall I endure who half am failing
now ?

'Nay, weld thy resolute will
To Mine : glance not aside for good
or ill :
I love thee ; trust Me still and love
Me still.'

Yet Thou Thyself hast said,
When Thou shalt sift the living from
the dead
Some must depart shamed and un-
comforted.

'Judge not before that day :
Trust Me with all thy heart, even
tho' I slay :
Trust Me in love, trust on, love on,
and pray.'

Before 1893.

MONDAY IN HOLY WEEK

'The Voice of my Beloved.'

ONCE I ached for thy dear sake :
Wilt thou cause Me now to ache ?
Once I bled for thee in pain :
Wilt thou rend My Heart again ?
Crown of thorns and shameful tree,
Bitter death I bore for thee,
Bore My Cross to carry thee,
And wilt thou have nought of Me ?

1853.

TUESDAY IN HOLY WEEK

By Thy long-drawn anguish to atone,
Jesus Christ, show mercy on Thine
own :

Jesus Christ, show mercy and atone
Not for other sake except Thine own.

Thou Who thirsting on the Cross
didst see

All mankind and all I love and me,
Still from Heaven look down in love
and see

All mankind and all I love and me.

Before 1886.

WEDNESDAY IN HOLY WEEK

MAN'S life is death. Yet Christ
endured to live,
Preaching and teaching, toiling
to and fro,
Few men accepting what He yearned
to give,
Few men with eyes to know
His Face, that Face of Love He
stooped to show.

Man's death is life. For Christ
endured to die
In slow unuttered weariness of
pain,
A curse and an astonishment, passed
by,
Pointed at, mocked again
By men for whom He shed His
Blood—in vain?

Before 1886.

MAUNDY THURSDAY

'And the Vine said . . . Should I leave
my wine which cheereth God and
man, and go to be promoted over the
trees?'

THE great Vine left its glory to
reign as Forest King.

'Nay,' quoth the lofty forest trees,
'we will not have this thing;
We will not have this supple one
enring us with its ring.

Lo from immemorial time our might
towers shadowing:

Not we were born to curve and
droop, not we to climb and
cling:

We buffet back the buffeting wind,
tough to its buffeting:

We screen great beasts, the wild
fowl build in our heads and
sing,

Every bird of every feather from off
our tops takes wing:

I a king, and thou a king, and what
king shall be our king?'

Nevertheless the great Vine stooped
to be the Forest King,

While the forest swayed and mur-
mured like seas that are tem-
pesting:

Stooped and drooped with thousand
tendrils in thirsty languishing;

Bowed to earth and lay on earth for
earth's replenishing;

Put off sweetness, tasted bitterness,
endured time's fashioning;

Put off life and put on death:—and
lo it was all to bring

All its fellows down to a death
which hath lost the sting,

All its fellows up to a life in endless
triumphing,—

I a king, and thou a king, and this
King to be our King.

Before 1886.

GOOD FRIDAY MORNING

'Bearing His Cross.'

UP Thy Hill of Sorrows

Thou all alone,

Jesus, man's Redeemer,

Climbing to a Throne:

Thro' the world triumphant,

Thro' the Church in pain,

Which think to look upon Thee

No more again.

Upon my hill of sorrows

I, Lord, with Thee,

Cheered, upheld, yea carried

If a need should be:

Cheered, upheld, yea carried,
 Never left alone,
 Carried in Thy heart of hearts
 To a throne.

1893.

GOOD FRIDAY

LORD Jesus Christ, grown faint upon
 the Cross,

A sorrow beyond sorrow in Thy
 look,

The unutterable craving for my
 soul ;

Thy love of me sufficed
 To load upon Thee and make good
 my loss

In face of darkened heaven and
 earth that shook :—

In face of earth and heaven,
 take Thou my whole
 Heart, O Lord Jesus Christ.

Before 1886.

GOOD FRIDAY EVENING

' Bring forth the Spear.'

NO Cherub's heart or hand for us
 might ache,

No Seraph's heart of fire had half
 sufficed :

Thine own were pierced and broken
 for our sake,
 O Jesus Christ.

Therefore we love Thee with our
 faint good-will,

We crave to love Thee not as
 heretofore,

To love Thee much, to love Thee
 more, and still

More and yet more.

Before 1893.

' A bundle of myrrh is my Well-beloved
 unto me.'

THY Cross cruciferous doth flower
 in all

And every cross, dear Lord,
 assigned to us :

Ours lowly-statured crosses ; Thine
 how tall,

Thy Cross cruciferous.

Thy Cross alone life-giving,
 glorious :

For love of Thine, souls love their
 own when small,

Easy and light, or great and
 ponderous.

Since deep calls deep, Lord, hearken
 when we call ;

When cross calls Cross racking
 and emulous :—

Remember us with him who shared
 Thy gall,

Thy Cross cruciferous.

Before 1893.

EASTER EVEN

THE tempest over and gone, the
 calm begun,

Lo, ' it is finished ' and the Strong
 Man sleeps :

All stars keep vigil watching for the
 sun,

The moon her vigil keeps.

A garden full of silence and of
 dew

Beside a virgin cave and entrance
 stone :

Surely a garden full of Angels
 too,

Wondering, on watch, alone.

They who cry 'Holy, Holy, Holy,'
 still
 Veiling their faces round God's
 Throne above,
 May well keep vigil on this heavenly
 hill
 And cry their cry of love,

Adoring God in His new mystery
 Of Love more deep than hell,
 more strong than death ;
 Until the day break and the shadows
 flee,
 The Shaking and the Breath.
Before 1886.

(Our Church Palms are budding willow
 twigs.)

WHILE Christ lay dead the widowed
 world
 Wore willow green for hope un-
 done :
 Till, when bright Easter dew's im-
 pearled
 The chilly burial earth,
 All north and south, all east and
 west,
 Flushed rosy in the arising sun ;
 Hope laughed, and Faith resumed
 her rest,
 And Love remembered mirth.
Before 1893.

EASTER DAY

WORDS cannot utter
 Christ His returning :
 Mankind, keep jubilee,
 Strip off your mourning,
 Crown you with garlands,
 Set your lamps burning.

Speech is left speechless ;
 Set you to singing,
 Fling your hearts open wide,
 Set your bells ringing :
 Christ the Chief Reaper
 Comes, His sheaf bringing.

Earth wakes her song-birds,
 Puts on her flowers,
 Leads out her lambkins,
 Builds up her bowers :
 This is man's spousal day,
 Christ's day and ours.
Before 1886.

EASTER MONDAY

OUT in the rain a world is growing
 green,
 On half the trees quick buds are
 seen
 Where glued-up buds have
 been.
 Out in the rain God's Acre stretches
 green,
 Its harvest quick tho' still unseen :
 For there the Life hath been.

If Christ hath died His brethren
 well may die,
 Sing in the gate of death, lay by
 This life without a sigh :
 For Christ hath died and good it is
 to die ;
 To sleep when so He lays us by,
 Then wake without a sigh.

Yea, Christ hath died, yea, Christ is
 risen again :
 Wherefore both life and death
 grow plain
 To us who wax and wane ;

For Christ Who rose shall die no
more again :

Amen : till He makes all things
plain

Let us wax on and wane.

Before 1886.

EASTER TUESDAY

‘TOGETHER with my dead body
shall they arise.’

Shall my dead body arise ? then
amen and yea

On track of a home beyond the
uttermost skies

Together with my dead body
shall they.

We know the way : thank God Who
hath showed us the way !

Jesus Christ our Way to beautiful
Paradise,

Jesus Christ the Same for ever, the
Same to-day.

Five Virgins replenish with oil their
lamps, being wise,

Five Virgins awaiting the Bride-
groom watch and pray :

And if I one day spring from my
grave to the prize,

Together with my dead body
shall they.

Before 1893.

ROGATIONTIDE

WHO scatters tares shall reap no
wheat,

But go hungry while others eat.

Who sows the wind shall not reap
grain ;

The sown wind whirleth back again.

What God opens must open be,
Tho’ man pile the sand of the sea.

What God shuts is opened no more,
Tho’ man weary himself to find the
door.

Before 1886.

ASCENSION EVE

O LORD Almighty Who hast formed
us weak,

With us whom Thou hast formed
deal fatherly ;

Be found of us whom Thou hast
deigned to seek,

Be found that we the more may
seek for Thee ;

Lord, speak and grant us ears to
hear Thee speak ;

Lord, come to us and grant us
eyes to see ;

Lord, make us meek, for Thou
Thyself art meek ;

Lord, Thou art Love, fill us with
charity.

O Thou the Life of living and of
dead,

Who givest more the more Thy-
self hast given,

Suffice us as Thy saints Thou
hast sufficed ;

That beautified, replenished, com-
forted,

Still gazing off from earth and up
at heaven,

We may pursue Thy steps,
Lord Jesus Christ.

Before 1893.

ASCENSION DAY

'A Cloud received Him out of their sight.'

WHEN Christ went up to Heaven
the Apostles stayed
Gazing at Heaven with souls and
wills on fire,
Their hearts on flight along the
track He made,
Winged by desire.

Their silence spake: 'Lord, why
not follow Thee?

Home is not home without Thy
Blessed Face,
Life is not life. Remember, Lord,
and see,
Look back, embrace.

'Earth is one desert waste of
banishment,
Life is one long-drawn anguish of
decay.
Where Thou wert wont to go we
also went:
Why not to-day?'

Nevertheless a cloud cut off their
gaze:

They tarry to build up Jerusalem,
Watching for Him, while thro' the
appointed days
He watches them.

They do His Will, and doing it
rejoice,
Patiently glad to spend and to be
spent:
Still He speaks to them, still they
hear His Voice
And are content.

For as a cloud received Him from
their sight,
So with a cloud will He return
ere long:

Therefore they stand on guard by
day, by night,
Strenuous and strong.

They do, they dare, they beyond
seven times seven
Forgive, they cry God's mighty
word aloud:

Yet sometimes haply lift tired eyes
to Heaven—

'Is that His cloud?'

Before 1886.

WHITSUN EVE

'As many as I love.'—Ah Lord,
Who lovest all,
If thus it is with Thee why sit
remote above,
Beholding from afar, stumbling and
marred and small,
So many Thou dost love?

Whom sin and sorrow make their
worn reluctant thrall;

Who fain would flee away but
lack the wings of dove;
Who long for love and rest; who
look to Thee, and call
To Thee for rest and love.

Before 1893.

WHITSUN DAY

'When the Day of Pentecost was
fully come.'

AT sound as of rushing wind, and
sight as of fire,
Lo flesh and blood made spirit
and fiery flame,

Ambassadors in Christ's and the
Father's Name,
To woo back a world's desire.

These men chose death for their life
and shame for their boast,
For fear courage, for doubt in-
tuition of faith,
Chose love that is strong as death
and stronger than death
In the power of the Holy Ghost.

Before 1886.

WHITSUN MONDAY

'A pure River of Water of Life.'

We know not a voice of that River,
If vocal or silent it be,
Where for ever and ever and ever
It flows to no sea.

More deep than the seas is that River,
More full than their manifold tides,
Where for ever and ever and ever
It flows and abides.

Pure gold is the bed of that River
(The gold of that land is the best),
Where for ever and ever and ever
It flows on at rest.

Oh goodly the banks of that River,
Oh goodly the fruits that they bear,
Where for ever and ever and ever
It flows and is fair.

For lo on each bank of that River
The Tree of Life life-giving grows,
Where for ever and ever and ever
The Pure River flows.

Before 1893.

WHITSUN TUESDAY

LORD Jesus Christ, our Wisdom and
our Rest,
Who wisely dost reveal and wisely
hide,
Grant us such grace in wisdom to
abide

According to Thy Will whose Will
is best.

Contented with Thine uttermost be-
hest,

Too sweet for envy and too high
for pride ;

All simple-souled, dove-hearted
and dove-eyed,

Soft-voiced, and satisfied in humble
nest.

Wondering at the bounty of Thy
Love

Which gives us wings of silver
and of gold ;

Wings folded close, yet ready to
unfold

When Thou shalt say, 'Winter
is past and gone :'

When Thou shalt say, 'Spouse,
sister, love and dove,

Come hither, sit with Me upon
My Throne.'

Before 1886.

TRINITY SUNDAY

MY God, Thyself being Love Thy
heart is love,

And love Thy Will and love Thy
Word to us,

Whether Thou show us depths
calamitous

Or heights and flights of rapturous
peace above.

O Christ the Lamb, O Holy Ghost
 the Dove,
 Reveal the Almighty Father unto
 us ;
 That we may tread Thy courts
 felicitous,
 Loving Who loves us, for our God
 is Love.
 Lo, if our God be Love thro' heaven's
 long day,
 Love is He thro' our mortal
 pilgrimage,
 Love was He thro' all aeons
 that are told.
 We change, but Thou remainest ;
 for Thine age
 Is, Was, and Is to come, nor
 new nor old ;
 We change, but Thou remainest ;
 yea and yea !

Before 1893.

CONVERSION OF ST. PAUL

O BLESSED Paul elect to grace,
 Arise and wash away thy sin,
 Anoint thy head and wash thy face,
 Thy gracious course begin.
 To start thee on thy outrunning race
 Christ shows the splendour of His
 Face :
 What will that Face of splendour be
 When at the goal He welcomes thee ?

Before 1886.

IN weariness and painfulness St.
 Paul
 Served God and pleased Him :
 after-saints no less
 Can wait on and can please Him,
 one and all
 In weariness and painfulness,

By faith and hope triumphant
 thro' distress :
 Not with the rankling service of a
 thrall ;
 But even as loving children trust
 and bless,
 Weep and rejoice, answering their
 Father's call,
 Work with tired hands, and for-
 ward upward press
 On sore tired feet still rising when
 they fall,
 In weariness and painfulness.
Before 1886.

VIGIL OF THE PRESENTATION

LONG and dark the nights, dim and
 short the days,
 Mounting weary heights on our
 weary ways,
 Thee our God we praise.
 Scaling heavenly heights by un-
 earthly ways,
 Thee our God we praise all our
 nights and days,
 Thee our God we praise.
Before 1893.

FEAST OF THE PRESENTATION

O FIRSTFRUITS of our grain,
 Infant and Lamb appointed to be
 slain,
 A Virgin and two doves were all
 Thy train,
 With one old man for state,
 When Thou didst enter first Thy
 Father's gate.
 Since then Thy train hath been
 Freeman and bondman, bishop, king
 and queen,

With flaming candles and with gar-
lands green :
Oh happy all who wait
One day or thousand days around
Thy gate !

And these have offered Thee,
Beside their hearts, great stores for
charity,
Gold, frankincense, and myrrh ; if
such may be
For savour or for state
Within the threshold of Thy golden
gate.

Then snowdrops and my heart
I'll bring, to find those blacker than
Thou art :
Yet, loving Lord, accept us in good
part ;
And give me grace to wait,
A bruised reed bowed low before
Thy gate.

Circa 1877.

THE PURIFICATION OF ST. MARY THE VIRGIN

PURITY born of a Maid :
Was such a Virgin defiled ?
Nay, by no shade of a shade.
She offered her gift of pure love,
A dove with a fair fellow-dove.
She offered her Innocent Child
The Essence and Author of Love ;
The Lamb that indwelt by the
Dove
Was spotless and holy and mild ;
More pure than all other,
More pure than His Mother,
Her God and Redeemer and Child.

Before 1886.

VIGIL OF THE ANNUNCIATION

ALL weareth, all wasteth,
All flitteth, all hasteth,
All of flesh and time :—
Sound, sweet heavenly chime,
Ring in the unutterable eternal
prime.

Man hopeth, man feareth,
Man droopeth :—Christ cheereth,
Compassing release,
Comforting with peace,
Promising rest where strife and
anguish cease.

Saints waking, saints sleeping,
Rest well in safe keeping ;
Well they rest to-day
While they watch and pray,—
But their to-morrow's rest what
tongue shall say ?

Before 1893.

FEAST OF THE ANNUNCIATION

WHERE TO shall we liken this Blessed
Mary Virgin,
Fruitful shoot from Jesse's root
graciously emerging ?
Lily we might call her, but Christ
alone is white ;
Rose delicious, but that Jesus is the
one Delight ;
Flower of women, but her Firstborn
is mankind's one flower :
He the Sun lights up all moons thro'
their radiant hour.
'Blessed among women, highly
favoured,' thus
Glorious Gabriel hailed her, teaching
words to us :

Whom devoutly copying we too cry
‘All hail!’

Echoing on the music of glorious
Gabriel.

Before 1886.

HERSELF a rose, who bore the Rose,
She bore the Rose and felt its
thorn.

All Loveliness new-born
Took on her bosom its repose,
And slept and woke there night
and morn.

Lily herself, she bore the one
Fair Lily; sweeter, whiter, far
Than she or others are:

The Sun of Righteousness her Son,
She was His morning star.

She gracious, He essential Grace,
He was the Fountain, she the rill:
Her goodness to fulfil
And gladness, with proportioned pace
He led her steps thro’ good and
ill.

Christ’s mirror she of grace and love,
Of beauty and of life and death:
By hope and love and faith
Transfigured to His Likeness, ‘Dove,
Spouse, Sister, Mother,’ Jesus
saith.

Circa 1877.

ST. MARK

ONCE like a broken bow Mark
sprang aside:

Yet grace recalled him to a worthier
course,

To feeble hands and knees increas-
ing force,

Till God was magnified.

And now a strong Evangelist, St.
Mark

Hath for his sign a Lion in his
strength;

And thro’ the stormy water’s breadth
and length

He helps to steer God’s Ark.

Thus calls he sinners to be peni-
tents,

He kindles penitents to high desire,
He mounts before them to the sphere
of saints,

And bids them come up higher.

Circa 1877.

ST. BARNABAS

‘Now when we had discovered Cyprus, we
left it on the left hand.’—*Acts* xxi. 3.

‘We sailed under Cyprus, because the
winds were contrary.’—*Acts* xxvii. 4.

ST. BARNABAS, with John his sister’s
son,

Set sail for Cyprus; leaving in
their wake

That Chosen Vessel who for Jesus’
sake

Proclaimed the Gentiles and the
Jews at one.

Divided while united, each must run
His mighty course not hell should
overtake;

And pressing toward the mark
must own the ache

Of love, and sigh for heaven not yet
begun.

For saints in life-long exile yearn to
touch

Warm human hands, and com-
mune face to face;

But these we know not ever
met again:

Yet once St. Paul at distance over-
much

Just sighted Cyprus ; and once
more in vain

Neared it and passed ;—not there
his landing-place.

Circa 1877.

VIGIL OF ST. PETER

O JESU, gone so far apart

Only my heart can follow Thee,
That look which pierced St. Peter's
heart

Turn now on me.

Thou who dost search me thro' and
thro'

And mark the crooked ways I
went,

Look on me, Lord, and make me too
Thy penitent.

Before 1893.

ST. PETER

'LAUNCH out into the deep,' Christ
spake of old

To Peter : and he launched into
the deep ;

Strengthened should tempest wake
which lay asleep,

Strengthened to suffer heat or suffer
cold.

Thus, in Christ's Prescience : patient
to behold

A fall, a rise, a scaling Heaven's
high steep ;

Prescience of Love, which deigned
to overleap

The mire of human errors manifold.

Lord, Lover of Thy Peter, and of him
Beloved with craving of a humbled
heart

Which eighteen hundred years
have satisfied ;

Hath he his throne among Thy
Seraphim

Who love ? or sits he on a throne
apart,

Unique, near Thee, to love Thee
human-eyed ?

Before 1893.

ST. PETER once : ' Lord, dost Thou
wash my feet ? '—

Much more I say : Lord, dost Thou
stand and knock

At my closed heart more rugged
than a rock,

Bolted and barred, for Thy soft touch
unmeet,

Nor garnished nor in any wise made
sweet ?

Owls roost within and dancing
satyrs mock.

Lord, I have heard the crowing of
the cock

And have not wept : ah, Lord, Thou
knowest it.

Yet still I hear Thee knocking, still
I hear :

' Open to Me, look on Me eye to
eye,

That I may wring thy heart and
make it whole ;

And teach thee love because I hold
thee dear,

And sup with thee in gladness
soul with soul,

And sup with thee in glory by
and by.'

Before 1893.

I FOLLOWED Thee, my God, I
followed Thee
To see the end :
I turned back flying from Gethse-
mane,
Turned back on flying steps to see
Thy Face, my God, my Friend.

Even fleeing from Thee my heart
clave to Thee :
I turned perforce
Constrained, yea chained by love
which maketh free ;
I turned perforce, and silently
Followed along Thy course.

Lord, didst Thou know that I was
following Thee ?
I weak and small
Yet Thy true lover, mean tho' I must
be,
Sinning and sorrowing—didst Thou
see ?
O Lord, Thou sawest all.

I thought I had been strong to die
for Thee ;
I disbelieved
Thy word of warning spoken
patiently :
My heart cried, 'That be far from
me,'
Till Thy bruised heart I grieved.

Once I had urged : 'Lord, this be
far from Thee' :—
Rebel to light,
It needed first that Thou shouldst
die for me
Or ever I could plumb and see
Love's lovely depth and height.

Alas that I should trust myself, not
Thee ;

Not trust Thy word :
I faithless slumberer in Gethsemane,
Blinded and rash ; who instantly
Put trust, but in a sword.

Ah Lord, if even at the last in Thee
I had put faith,
I might even at the last have coun-
selled me,
And not have heaped up cruelty
To sting Thee in Thy death.

Alas for me, who bore to think on
Thee
And yet to lie !
While Thou, O Lord, didst bear to
look on me
Goaded by fear to blasphemy,
And break my heart and die.

No balm I find in Gilead, yet in Thee
Nailed to Thy palm
I find a balm that wrings and com-
forts me :
Balm wrung from Thee by agony,
My balm, mine only balm.

Oh blessed John who standeth close
to Thee,
With Magdalene,
And Thine own Mother praying
silently,
Yea, blessed above women she,
Now blessed even as then.

And blessed the scorned thief who
hangs by Thee,
Whose thirsting mouth
Thirsts for Thee more than water,
whose eyes see,
Whose lips confess in ecstasy
Nor feel their parching drouth.

Like as the hart the water-brooks I
Thee
Desire, my hands
I stretch to Thee ; O kind Lord,
pity me :
Lord, I have wept, wept bitterly,
I driest of dry lands.

Lord, I am standing far far off from
Thee ;
Yet is my heart
Hanging with Thee upon the ac-
cursed tree ;
The nails, the thorns, pierce Thee
and me :
My God, I claim my part—

Scarce in Thy throne and kingdom ;
yet with Thee
In shame, in loss,
In Thy forsaking, in Thine agony :
Love crucified, behold even me,
Me also bear Thy cross.

Circa 1877.

VIGIL OF ST. BARTHOLOMEW

LORD, to Thine own grant watchful
hearts and eyes ;
Hearts strung to prayer, awake
while eyelids sleep ;
Eyes patient till the end to watch
and weep.
So will sleep nourish power to wake
and rise
With Virgins who keep vigil and
are wise,
To sow among all sowers who
shall reap,
From out man's deep to call Thy
vaster deep,
And tread the uphill track to
Paradise.

R

Sweet souls ! so patient that they
make no moan,
So calm on journey that they
seem at rest,
So rapt in prayer that half they
dwell in heaven,
Thankful for all withheld and
all things given ;
So lit by love that Christ shines
manifest
Transfiguring their aspects to His
own.

Before 1893.

ST. BARTHOLOMEW

HE bore an agony whereof the
name
Hath turned his fellows pale :
But what if God should call us to
the same,
Should call, and we should fail ?

Nor earth nor sea could swallow up
our shame,
Nor darkness draw a veil :
For he endured that agony whose
name
Hath made his fellows quail.

Before 1886.

ST. MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS

'Ye that excel in strength.'

SERVICE and strength, God's Angels
and Archangels ;
His Seraphs fires, and lamps His
Cherubim :
Glory to God from highest and from
lowest,
Glory to God in everlasting hymn
From all His creatures.

N

Princes that serve, and Powers that
work His pleasure,
Heights that soar to'ard Him,
Depths that sink to'ard Him;
Flames fire out-flaming, chill beside
His Essence;
Insight all-probing, save where
scant and dim
To'ard its Creator.

Sacred and free exultant in God's
pleasure,
His Will their solace, thus they
wait on Him;
And shout their shout of ecstasy
eternal,
And trim their splendours that
they burn not dim
To'ard their Creator.

Wherefore with Angels, wherefore
with Archangels,
With lofty Cherubs, loftier Sera-
phim,
We laud and magnify our God
Almighty,
And veil our faces rendering love
to Him
With all His creatures.

Circa 1877.

VIGIL OF ALL SAINTS

UP, my drowsing eyes!
Up, my sinking heart!
Up to Jesus Christ arise!
Claim your part
In all raptures of the skies.
Yet a little while,
Yet a little way,
Saints shall reap and rest and smile
All the day.
Up! let's trudge another mile.

Before 1886.

ALL SAINTS

As grains of sand, as stars, as drops
of dew,
Numbered and treasured by the
Almighty Hand,
The Saints triumphant throng
that holy land
Where all things and Jerusalem are
new.
We know not half they sing or half
they do,
But this we know, they rest and
understand;
While like a conflagration freshly
fanned
Their love glows upward, outward,
thro' and thro'.
Lo like a stream of incense
launched on flame
Fresh Saints stream up from
death to life above,
To shine among those others
and rejoice:
What matters tribulation whence
they came?
All love and only love can find
a voice
Where God makes glad His
Saints, for God is Love.

Before 1886.

ALL SAINTS: MARTYRS

ONCE slain for Him who first was
slain for them,
Now made alive in Him for ever-
more,
All luminous and lovely in their
gore,
With no more buffeting winds or
tides to stem,
The Martyrs look for New Jerusalem;

And cry 'How long?' remembering
 all they bore,
 'How long?' with heart and eyes
 sent on before
 Toward consummated throne and
 diadem.
 'How long?' White robes are
 given to their desire;
 'How long?' deep rest that is
 and is to be;
 With a great promise of the
 oncoming host,
 Loves to their love and fires to flank
 their fire:
 So rest they, worshiping in-
 cessantly
 One God, the Father, Son, and
 Holy Ghost.

Before 1893.

'I gave a sweet smell.'

SAINTS are like roses when they
 flush rarest,
 Saints are like lilies when they
 bloom fairest,
 Saints are like violets sweetest of
 their kind:
 Bear in mind
 This to-day. Then to-
 morrow:

All like roses rarer than the rarest,
 All like lilies fairer than the fairest,
 All like violets sweeter than we
 know.
 Be it so.

To-morrow blots out sorrow.

Before 1886.

HARK! the Alleluias of the great
 salvation,
 Still beginning, never ending,
 still begin,
 The thunder of an endless adoration:

Open ye the gates, that the righteous
 nation
 Which have kept the truth may
 enter in.

Roll ye back, ye pearls, on your
 twelvefold station:
 No more deaths to die, no more
 fights to win!
 Lift your heads, ye gates, that the
 righteous nation,
 Led by the Great Captain of their
 sole salvation,
 Having kept the truth, may enter
 in.

Before 1893.

A SONG FOR THE LEAST OF ALL SAINTS

LOVE is the key of life and death,
 Of hidden heavenly mystery:
 Of all Christ is, of all He saith,
 Love is the key.

As three times to His Saint He saith,
 He saith to me, He saith to thee,
 Breathing His Grace-conferring
 Breath:
 'Lovest thou Me?'

Ah, Lord, I have such feeble faith,
 Such feeble hope to comfort me:
 But love it is, is strong as death,
 And I love Thee.

Before 1893.

SUNDAY BEFORE ADVENT

THE end of all things is at hand.
 We all
 Stand in the balance trembling
 as we stand;
 Or if not trembling, tottering to a fall.
 The end of all things is at hand.

O hearts of men, covet the un-
ending land !
O hearts of men, covet the musical,
Sweet, never - ending waters of
that strand !

While Earth shows poor, a slippery
rolling ball,
And Hell looms vast, a gulf un-
plumbed, unspanned,
And Heaven flings wide its gates to
great and small,
The end of all things is at hand.
Before 1893.

THERE REMAINETH THERE- FORE A REST

IN the grave will be no space
For the purple of the proud—
They must mingle with the crowd :
In the wrappings of a shroud
Jewels would be out of place.

There no laughter shall be heard,
Nor the heavy sound of sighs :
Sleep shall seal the aching eyes :
All the ancient and the wise
There shall utter not a word.

Yet it may be we shall hear
How the mounting skylark sings
And the bell for matins rings ;
Or perhaps the whisperings
Of white Angels sweet and clear.

What a calm when all is done,
Wearing vigil, prayer, and fast !
All fulfilled from first to last :
All the length of time gone past
And eternity begun.

Fear and hope and chastening rod
Urge us on the narrow way :
Bear we still as best we may
Heat and burden of the day,
Struggling, panting up to God.

17 February 1854.

PARADISE

ONCE in a dream I saw the flowers
That bud and bloom in Paradise ;
More fair they are than waking
eyes
Have seen in all this world of ours.
And faint the perfume-bearing rose,
And faint the lily on its stem,
And faint the perfect violet,
Compared with them.

I heard the songs of Paradise :
Each bird sat singing in his place ;
A tender song so full of grace
It soared like incense to the skies.
Each bird sat singing to his mate
Soft cooing notes among the trees :
The nightingale herself were cold
To such as these.

I saw the fourfold River flow,
And deep it was, with golden sand ;
It flowed between a mossy land
With murmured music grave and low.
It hath refreshment for all thirst,
For fainting spirits strength and
rest ;
Earth holds not such a draught as
this
From east to west.

The Tree of Life stood budding
there,
Abundant with its twelvefold
fruits ;
Eternal sap sustains its roots,
Its shadowing branches fill the air.

Its leaves are healing for the world,
 Its fruit the hungry world can
 feed,
 Sweeter than honey to the taste
 And balm indeed.

I saw the Gate called Beautiful ;
 And looked, but scarce could look
 within ;

I saw the golden streets begin,
 And outskirts of the glassy pool.
 Oh harps, oh crowns of plenteous
 stars,

Oh green palm branches many-
 leaved—
 Eye hath not seen, nor ear hath
 heard,
 Nor heart conceived.

I hope to see these things again,
 But not as once in dreams by
 night ;

To see them with my very sight,
 And touch and handle and attain :
 To have all heaven beneath my feet
 For narrow way that once they
 trod ;

To have my part with all the saints,
 And with my God.

28 February 1854.

YE HAVE FORGOTTEN THE EXHORTATION

ANGEL

BURY thy dead, dear friend,
 Between the night and day :
 Where depths of summer shade
 are cool,
 And murmurs of a summer pool
 And windy murmurs stray :—

SOUL

Ah gone away,
 Ah dear and lost delight,
 Gone from me and for ever out of
 sight !

ANGEL

Bury thy dead, dear love,
 And make his bed most fair above :
 The latest buds shall still
 Blow there, and the first violets
 too,
 And there a turtle-dove
 Shall brood and coo :—

SOUL

I cannot make the nest
 So warm but he may find it
 chill
 In solitary rest.

ANGEL

Bury thy dead heart-deep :
 Take patience till the sun be
 set :
 There are no tears for him to
 weep,
 No doubts to haunt him yet :
 Take comfort, he will not
 forget :—

SOUL

Then I will watch beside his
 sleep :
 Will watch alone,
 And make my moan
 Because the harvest is so long to
 reap.

ANGEL

The fields are white to harvest, look
 and see,
 Are white abundantly.

The harvest-moon shines full
and clear,
The harvest-time is near,
Be of good cheer :—

SOUL

Ah woe is me !
I have no heart for harvest-
time,
Grown sick with hope deferred from
chime to chime.

ANGEL

But One can give thee heart, thy
Lord and his,
Can raise both thee and
him
To shine with Seraphim,
And pasture where the eternal
fountain is ;
Can give thee of that tree
Whose leaves are health for
thee ;
Can give thee robes made clean
and white,
And love, and all delight,
And beauty where the day turns not
to night.
Who knocketh at His door,
And presseth in, goes out no
more.
Kneel as thou hast not knelt
before—
The time is short — and
smite
Upon thy breast and pray with all
thy might :—

SOUL

O Lord, my heart is broken for my
sin :
Yet hasten Thine own day
And come away.

Is not time full ? Oh put the sickle
in,
O Lord, begin !
10 May 1854.

THE WORLD

By day she woos me, soft, exceed-
ing fair :
But all night as the moon so
changeth she ;
Loathsome and foul with hideous
leprosy,
And subtle serpents gliding in her
hair.
By day she woos me to the outer
air,
Ripe fruits, sweet flowers, and
full satiety :
But thro' the night a beast she
grins at me,
A very monster void of love and
prayer.
By day she stands a lie : by night
she stands
In all the naked horror of the
truth,
With pushing horns and clawed and
clutching hands.
Is this a friend indeed, that I should
sell
My soul to her, give her my life
and youth,
Till my feet, cloven too, take hold
on hell ?
27 June 1854.

UNFORGOTTEN

O UNFORGOTTEN !
How long ago ? one spirit saith.
As long as life even unto death,
The passage of a poor frail breath.

O unforgotten !

An unforgotten load of love,
A load of grief all griefs above,
A blank blank nest without its dove.

As long as time is :—

No longer ? Time is but a span,
The dalliance-space of empty man :
And is this all immortals can ?

Ever and ever,

Beyond all time, beyond all space :
Now shadows darkening heart and
face ;

Then glory in a glorious place.

Sad heart and spirit,

Bowed now, yea broken, for a while—
Lagging and toiling mile by mile,
Yet pressing toward the Eternal
Smile.

O joy eternal !

O youth eternal without flaw !—
Thee not the blessed Angels saw,
Rapt in august adoring awe.

Not the dead have thee,

Not yet, O all-surpassing peace :
Not till this veiling world shall cease
And harvest yield its whole increase.

Not the dead know thee,

Not dead nor living nor unborn :
Who in the new-sown field at morn
Can measure out the harvest corn ?—

Yet they shall know thee :

And we with them, and unborn men
With us, shall know and have thee
when
The single grain shall wax to ten.

1855.

ZION SAID

O SLAIN for love of me, canst Thou
be cold,

Be cold and far away in my
distress ?

Is Thy love also changed, growing
less and less,

That carried me through all the
days of old ?

O Slain for love of me, O Love
untold,

See how I flag and fail through
weariness :

I flag, while sleepless foes dog
me and press

On me : behold, O Lord, O Love,
behold !

I am sick for home, the home of
love indeed—

I am sick for Love, that dearest
name for Thee :

Thou who hast bled, see how my
heart doth bleed :

Open Thy bleeding Side and let me
in :

Oh hide me in Thy Heart from
doubt and sin,

Oh take me to Thyself and comfort
me.

31 December 1855.

HYMN AFTER GABRIELE ROSSETTI

FIRST VERSION

T' amo e fra dolci affanni.

MY Lord, my Love ! in love's unrest
How often have I said,

'Blessed that John who on Thy
breast

Reclined his head.'

Thy touch it was, Love's Pelican,
Transformed him from above,
And made him amongst men the man
To show forth holy love.

Yet shall I envy blessed John?
Nay not so verily,
While Thou indweldest as Thine own
Me, even me:
Upbuilding with Thy Manhood's
worth

My frail humanity;
Yea Thy Divinehood pouring forth,
In fullness filling me.

Me, Lord, Thy temple consecrate,
Me unto Thee alone;
Within my heart set up Thy state
And mount Thy throne:
The Seraphim in ecstasy
Fall prone around Thy house,
For which of them hath tasted Thee,
My Manna and my Spouse?

Now Thou dost wear me for a robe
And sway and warm me through,
I scarce seem lesser than the globe,
Thy temple too:
O God, who for Thy dwelling-place
Dost take delight in me,
The ungirt immensity of space
Hath not encompassed Thee.

SECOND VERSION

My Lord, my Love! in pleasant
pain

How often have I said,
'Blessed that John who on Thy
breast
Laid down his head.'

It was that contact all divine
Transformed him from above,
And made him amongst men the man
To show forth holy love.

Yet shall I envy blessed John?
Nay not so verily,
Now that Thou, Lord, both Man and
God,

Dost dwell in me:
Upbuilding with Thy Manhood's
might
My frail humanity;
Yea, Thy Divinehood pouring forth,
In fullness filling me.

Me, Lord, Thy temple consecrate,
Even me to Thee alone;
Lord, reign upon my willing heart
Which is Thy throne:
To Thee the Seraphim fall down
Adoring round Thy house;
For which of them hath tasted
Thee,
My Manna and my Spouse?

Now that Thy life lives in my soul
And sways and warms it through,
I scarce seem lesser than the
world,
Thy temple too.

O God, who dwellest in my heart,
My God who fillest me,
The broad immensity itself
Hath not encompassed Thee.

Circa 1855.

I WILL LIFT UP MINE
EYES UNTO THE HILLS

I AM pale with sick desire,
For my heart is far away
From this world's fitful fire
And this world's waning day;
In a dream it overleaps
A world of tedious ills
To where the sunshine sleeps
On the everlasting hills.—

Say the Saints : 'There Angels
ease us

Glorified and white.'

They say : 'We rest in Jesus,
Where is not day or night.'

My soul saith : I have sought
For a home that is not gained,
I have spent yet nothing bought,
Have laboured but not attained ;
My pride strove to mount and
grow,

And hath but dwindled down ;
My love sought love, and lo !
Hath not attained its crown.—
Say the Saints : 'Fresh souls
increase us,

None languish or recede.'
They say : 'We love our Jesus,
And He loves us indeed.'

I cannot rise above,
I cannot rest beneath,
I cannot find out love,
Or escape from death ;
Dear hopes and joys gone by
Still mock me with a name ;
My best beloved die,
And I cannot die with them.—
Say the Saints : 'No deaths de-
crease us

Where our rest is glorious.'
They say : 'We live in Jesus
Who once died for us.'

Oh my soul, she beats her wings
And pants to fly away
Up to immortal things
In the heavenly day :
Yet she flags and almost faints :
Can such be meant for me ?—
'Come and see,' say the Saints ;
Saith Jesus : 'Come and see.'

Say the Saints : 'His pleasures
please us

Before God and the Lamb.'

'Come and taste My sweets,' saith
Jesus :

'Be with Me where I am.'

1 February 1856.

HOW LONG ?

My life is long—Not so the Angels
say

Who watch me waste it, trembling
whilst they weigh
Against eternity my lavished day.

My life is long—Not so the Saints
in peace

Judge, filled with plenitude that
cannot cease :

Oh life was short which bought such
large increase !

My life is long—Christ's word is
different :

The heat and burden of the day were
spent

On Him,—to me refreshing times are
sent.

Give me an Angel's heart, that day
nor night

Rests not from adoration its delight,
Still crying 'Holy holy' in the
height.

Give me the heart of Saints, who,
laid at rest

In better Paradise than Abraham's
breast,

In the everlasting Rock have made
their nest.

Give me Thy heart, O Christ, who
thirty-three
Slow years of sorrow countedst short
for me,
That where Thou art there Thy
beloved might be.

14 April 1856.

AMEN

It is over. What is over?
Nay, now much is over truly!—
Harvest days we toiled to sow for;
Now the sheaves are gathered
newly,
Now the wheat is garnered duly.

It is finished. What is finished?
Much is finished known or un-
known:
Lives are finished; time diminished;
Was the fallow field left unsown?
Will these buds be always un-
blown?

It suffices. What suffices?
All suffices reckoned rightly:
Spring shall bloom where now the
ice is,
Roses make the bramble sightly,
And the quickening sun shine
brightly,
And the latter wind blow lightly,
And my garden teem with spices.
20 April 1856.

A MARTYR

It is over the horrible pain,
All is over the struggle and doubt:
She's asleep though her friends stand
and weep,
She's asleep while the multitudes
shout:

Not to wake to her anguish again,
Not to wake until death is cast out.

Stoop, look at the beautiful face,
See the smile on the satisfied
mouth,
The hands crost—she hath con-
quered not lost:
She hath drunk who was fevered
with drouth:
She shall sleep in her safe resting-
place
While the hawk spreads her wings
toward the South.

She shall sleep while slow seasons
are given,
While daylight and darkness go
round:
Her heart is at rest in its nest,
Her body at rest in the ground:
She has travelled the long road to
heaven,
She sought it and now she has
found.

Will you follow the track that she
trod,
Will you tread in her footsteps,
my friend?
That pathway is rough, but enough
Are the light and the balm that
attend.
Do I tread in her steps, O my God,—
Shall I joy with her joy in the end?
23 April 1856.

NOW THEY DESIRE

THERE is a sleep we have not slept,
Safe in a bed unknown:
There hearts are staunchd that long
have wept
Alone or bled alone:

Sweet sleep that dreams not, or
 whose dream
 Is foretaste of the truth :
 Sweet sleep whose sweets are what
 they seem,
 Refreshing more than youth.

There is a sea whose waters clear
 Are never tempest-tost :
 There is a home whose children dear
 Are saved, not one is lost :
 There Cherubim and Seraphim
 And Angels dwell with Saints,
 Whose lustre no more dwindleth dim,
 Whose ardour never faints.

There is a Love which fills desire
 And can our love requite :
 Like fire it draws our lesser fire,
 Like greater light our light :
 For it we agonize in strife,
 We yearn, we famish thus—
 Lo in the far-off land of life
 Doth it not yearn for us ?

O fair, O fair Jerusalem,
 How fair, how far away,
 When shall we see thy Jasper-gem
 That gives thee light for day ?
 Thy sea of glass like fire, thy streets
 Of glass like virgin gold,
 Thy royal Elders on their seats,
 Thy four Beasts manifold ?

Fair City of delights, the Bride
 In raiment white and clean,
 When shall we see thee loving-eyed,
 Sun-girdled, happy Queen ?
 Without a wrinkle or a spot,
 Blood-cleansed, blood-purchased
 once :
 In how fair ground is fallen the lot
 Of all thy happy sons !

Dove's eyes beneath thy parted lock,
 A dove's soft voice is thine :
 Thy nest is safe within the Rock,
 Safe in the very Vine :
 Thy walls salvation buildeth them
 And all thy gates are praise,
 O fair, O fair Jerusalem,
 In sevenfold day of days.

13 August 1856.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

For my Godchildren.

THE Shepherds had an Angel,
 The Wise Men had a star,
 But what have I, a little child,
 To guide me home from far,
 Where glad stars sing together
 And singing angels are ?—

Lord Jesus is my Guardian,
 So I can nothing lack :
 The lambs lie in His bosom
 Along life's dangerous track :
 The wilful lambs that go astray
 He bleeding fetches back.

Lord Jesus is my guiding star,
 My beacon-light in heaven :
 He leads me step by step along
 The path of life uneven :
 He, true light, leads me to that
 land
 Whose day shall be as seven.

Those Shepherds through the lonely
 night
 Sat watching by their sheep,
 Until they saw the heavenly host
 Who neither tire nor sleep,
 All singing 'Glory glory'
 In festival they keep.

Christ watches me, His little lamb,
Cares for me day and night,
That I may be His own in heaven :
So angels clad in white
Shall sing their ' Glory glory '
For my sake in the height.

The Wise Men left their country
To journey morn by morn,
With gold and frankincense and
myrrh,
Because the Lord was born :
God sent a star to guide them
And sent a dream to warn.

My life is like their journey,
Their star is like God's book ;
I must be like those good Wise Men
With heavenward heart and
look :
But shall I give no gifts to God ?—
What precious gifts they took !

Lord, I will give my love to Thee,
Than gold much costlier,
Sweeter to Thee than frankincense,
More prized than choicest
myrrh :

Lord, make me dearer day by day,
Day by day holier ;

Nearer and dearer day by day :
Till I my voice unite,
And sing my ' Glory glory '
With angels clad in white ;
All ' Glory glory ' given to Thee
Through all the heavenly height.

6 October 1856.

NOT YOURS BUT YOU

' HE died for me : what can I offer
Him ?
Toward Him swells incense of
perpetual prayer :

His court wear crowns and aureoles
round their hair :

His ministers are subtle Cherubim ;
Ring within ring, white intense
Seraphim

Leap like immortal lightnings
through the air.

What shall I offer Him ? defiled
and bare,

My spirit broken and my brightness
dim.'—

' Give Me thy youth.'—' I yield it to
Thy rod,

As Thou didst yield Thy prime
of youth for me.'—

' Give Me thy life.'—' I give it
breath by breath ;

As Thou didst give Thy life so
give I Thee.'—

' Give Me thy love.'—' So be it, my
God, my God,

As Thou hast loved me even
to bitter death.'

27 October 1856.

AFTER THIS THE JUDGMENT

As eager homebound traveller to
the goal,

Or steadfast seeker on an un-
searched main,

Or martyr panting for an aureole,
My fellow-pilgrims pass me, and
attain

That hidden mansion of perpetual
peace

Where keen desire and hope
dwell free from pain.

That gate stands open of perennial
ease ;

I view the glory till I partly long,
Yet lack the fire of love which
quicken these.

O passing Angel, speed me with
 a song,
 A melody of heaven to reach my
 heart
 And rouse me to the race and
 make me strong ;
 Till in such music I take up my
 part
 Swelling those Hallelujahs full of
 rest,
 One, tenfold, hundredfold, with
 heavenly art,
 Fulfilling north and south and
 east and west, .
 Thousand, ten thousandfold, in-
 numerable,
 All blent in one yet each one
 manifest ;
 Each one distinguished and beloved
 as well
 As if no second voice in earth or
 heaven
 Were lifted up the Love of God to
 tell.
 Ah Love of God, which thine own
 Self hast given
 To me most poor, and made me
 rich in love,
 Love that dost pass the tenfold
 seven times seven,
 Draw Thou mine eyes, draw Thou
 my heart above,
 My treasure and my heart store
 Thou in Thee ;
 Brood over me with yearnings of a
 dove ;
 Be Husband, Brother, closest
 Friend to me ;
 Love me as very mother loves her
 son,
 Her sucking firstborn fondled on
 her knee :
 Yea, more than mother loves her
 little one ;

For, earthly, even a mother may
 forget
 And feel no pity for its piteous moan.
 But thou, O Love of God, re-
 member yet,
 Through the dry desert, through the
 waterflood
 (Life, death), until the Great
 White Throne is set.
 If now I am sick in chewing the
 bitter cud
 Of sweet past sin, though solaced
 by Thy grace
 And oftentimes strengthened by Thy
 Flesh and Blood,
 How shall I then stand up before
 Thy face
 When from Thine eyes repentance
 shall be hid
 And utmost Justice stand in
 Mercy's place ?
 When every sin I thought or spoke
 or did
 Shall meet me at the inexorable
 bar,
 And there be no man standing in
 the mid
 To plead for me ; while star fallen
 after star
 With heaven and earth are like a
 ripened shock,
 And all time's mighty works and
 wonders are
 Consumed as in a moment ; when
 no rock
 Remains to fall on me, no tree to
 hide,
 But I stand all creation's gazing-
 stock,
 Exposed and comfortless on every
 side,
 Placed trembling in the final balances
 Whose poise this hour, this
 moment, must be tried.—

Ah Love of God, if greater love than
this

Hath no man, that a man die for
his friend,

And if such love of love Thine own
Love is,

Plead with Thyself, with me,
before the end ;

Redeem me from the irrevocable past ;
Pitch Thou Thy Presence round
me to defend ;

Yea seek with piercèd feet, yea hold
me fast

With piercèd hands whose wounds
were made by love.

Not what I am, remember what
Thou wast

When darkness hid from Thee
Thy heavens above,

And sin Thy Father's Face, while
Thou didst drink

The bitter cup of death, didst
taste thereof

For every man ; while Thou wast
night to sink

Beneath the intense intolerable
rod,

Grown sick of love ; not what I am,
but think

Thy Life then ransomed mine,
my God, my God !

12 December 1856.

OLD AND NEW YEAR DITTIES

I

NEW Year met me somewhat sad :

Old Year leaves me tired,

Stripped of favourite things I had,

Baulked of much desired :

Yet farther on my road to-day,

God willing, farther on my way.

New Year coming on apace,

What have you to give me ?

Bring you scathe or bring you grace,

Face me with an honest face,

You shall not deceive me :

Be it good or ill, be it what you will,

It needs shall help me on my road,

My rugged way to heaven, please
God.

13 December 1856.

2

Watch with me, men, women, and
children dear,

You whom I love, for whom I hope
and fear,

Watch with me this last vigil of the
year.

Some hug their business, some their
pleasure scheme ;

Some seize the vacant hour to sleep
or dream ;

Heart locked in heart some kneel
and watch apart.

Watch with me, blessed spirits, who
delight

All through the holy night to walk
in white,

Or take your ease after the long-
drawn fight.

I know not if they watch with me :
I know

They count this eve of resurrection
slow,

And cry ' How long ? ' with urgent
utterance strong.

Watch with me, Jesus, in my loneli-
ness :

Though others say me nay, yet say
Thou yes ;

Though others pass me by, stop
Thou to bless.

Yea, Thou dost stop with me this
vigil night ;
To-night of pain, to-morrow of
delight :
I, Love, am Thine ; Thou, Lord my
God, art mine.

31 December 1858.

3

Passing away, saith the World,
passing away :
Chances, beauty, and youth, sapped
day by day :
Thy life never continueth in one
stay.
Is the eye waxen dim, is the dark
hair changing to grey
That hath won neither laurel nor
bay ?
I shall clothe myself in Spring and
bud in May :
Thou, root-stricken, shalt not rebuild
thy decay
On my bosom for aye.
Then I answered : Yea.

Passing away, saith my Soul, passing
away :
With its burden of fear and hope,
of labour and play,
Hearken what the past doth witness
and say :
Rust in thy gold, a moth is in thine
array,
A canker is in thy bud, thy leaf
must decay.
At midnight, at cockcrow, at morn-
ing, one certain day
Lo the Bridegroom shall come and
shall not delay ;
Watch thou and pray.
Then I answered : Yea.

Passing away, saith my God, passing
away :

Winter passeth after the long delay :
New grapes on the vine, new figs
on the tender spray,
Turtle calleth turtle in Heaven's
May.

Though I tarry, wait for Me, trust
Me, watch and pray :

Arise, come away, night is past and
lo it is day,

My love, My sister, My spouse, thou
shalt hear Me say.

Then I answered : Yea.

31 December 1860.

A BETTER RESURRECTION

I HAVE no wit, no words, no tears ;
My heart within me like a stone
Is numbed too much for hopes or
fears.

Look right, look left, I dwell alone ;
I lift mine eyes, but dimmed with
grief

No everlasting hills I see ;
My life is in the falling leaf :
O Jesus, quicken me.

My life is like a faded leaf,
My harvest dwindled to a husk :
Truly my life is void and brief
And tedious in the barren dusk ;
My life is like a frozen thing,
No bud nor greenness can I see ;
Yet rise it shall—the sap of Spring ;
O Jesus, rise in me.

My life is like a broken bowl,
A broken bowl that cannot hold
One drop of water for my soul
Or cordial in the searching cold ;

Cast in the fire the perished thing ;
 Melt and remould it, till it be
 A royal cup for Him, my King :
 O Jesus, drink of me.
 30 June 1857.

THE HEART KNOWETH ITS OWN BITTERNESS

WHEN all the over-work of life
 Is finished once, and fast asleep
 We swerve no more beneath the
 knife
 But taste that silence cool and
 deep ;
 Forgetful of the highways rough,
 Forgetful of the thorny scourge,
 Forgetful of the tossing surge,
 Then shall we find it is enough ?

How can we say 'enough' on
 earth—
 'Enough' with such a craving
 heart ?

I have not found it since my birth,
 But still have bartered part for
 part.

I have not held and hugged the
 whole,
 But paid the old to gain the new :
 Much have I paid, yet much is
 due,
 Till I am beggared sense and soul.

I used to labour, used to strive
 For pleasure with a restless will :
 Now if I save my soul alive
 All else what matters, good or ill ?
 I used to dream alone, to plan
 Unspoken hopes and days to
 come :—

Of all my past this is the sum—
 I will not lean on child of man.

To give, to give, not to receive !
 I long to pour myself, my soul,
 Not to keep back or count or leave,
 But king with king to give the
 whole.

I long for one to stir my deep—
 I have had enough of help and
 gift—

I long for one to search and sift
 Myself, to take myself and keep.

You scratch my surface with your
 pin,

You stroke me smooth with
 hushing breath :—

Nay pierce, nay probe, nay dig
 within,

Probe my quick core and sound
 my depth.

You call me with a puny call,
 You talk, you smile, you nothing
 do :

How should I spend my heart on
 you,

My heart that so outweighs you all ?

Your vessels are by much too
 strait :

Were I to pour, you could not
 hold.—

Bear with me : I must bear to wait,
 A fountain sealed through heat
 and cold.

Bear with me days or months or
 years :

Deep must call deep until the
 end

When friend shall no more envy
 friend

Nor vex his friend at unawares.

Not in this world of hope deferred,
 This world of perishable stuff :—

Eye hath not seen nor ear hath heard
Nor heart conceived that full
'enough':

Here moans the separating sea,
Here harvests fail, here breaks
the heart:

There God shall join and no
man part,

I full of Christ and Christ of me.

27 August 1857.

DIVERS WORLDS. TIME AND ETERNITY

(From 27 August 1857 to before 1893.)

EARTH has clear call of daily bells,
A chancel-vault of gloom and star,
A rapture where the anthems are,
A thunder when the organ swells:
Alas, man's daily life—what else?—
Is out of tune with daily bells.

While Paradise accords the chimes
Of Earth and Heaven, its patient
pause

Is rest fulfilling music's laws.
Saints sit and gaze, where oftentimes
Precursive flush of morning climbs
And air vibrates with coming chimes.

6 August 1858.

Escape to the Mountain.

I PEERED within, and saw a world
of sin;

Upward, and saw a world of
righteousness;

Downward, and saw darkness and
flame begin

Which no man can express.

I girt me up, I gat me up to flee
From face of darkness and devour-
ing flame:

R

And fled I had, but guilt is load-
ing me
With dust of death and shame.

Yet still the light of righteousness
beams pure,

Beams to me from the world of
far-off day:—

Lord, Who hast called them happy
that endure,

Lord, make me such as they.

Before 1893.

I LIFT mine eyes to see: earth
vanisheth.

I lift up wistful eyes and bend my
knee:

Trembling, bowed down, and face to
face with Death,

I lift mine eyes to see.

Lo what I see is Death that
shadows me:

Yet whilst I, seeing, draw a shudder-
ing breath,

Death like a mist grows rare
perceptibly.

Beyond the darkness light, beyond
the scathe

Healing, beyond the Cross a palm-
branch tree,

Beyond Death Life, on evidence of
faith:

I lift mine eyes to see.

Before 1893.

Yet a little while.

HEAVEN is not far, tho' far the sky
Overarching earth and main.

It takes not long to live and die,
Die, revive, and rise again.

O

Not long : how long ? Oh long re-
echoing song !

O Lord, how long ?

Before 1893.

Behold, it was very good.

ALL things are fair, if we had eyes
to see

How first God made them goodly
everywhere :

And goodly still in Paradise they
be,—

All things are fair.

O Lord, the solemn heavens Thy
praise declare ;

The multi-fashioned saints bring
praise to Thee,

As doves fly home and cast away
their care.

As doves on divers branches of their
tree,

Perched high or low, sit all con-
tented there,

Not mourning any more ; in each
degree

All things are fair.

Before 1893.

Whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive.

WHEN all the overwork of life

Is finished once, and fallen asleep

We shrink no more beneath the knife,

But having sown prepare to reap ;

Delivered from the crossway rough,

Delivered from the thorny scourge,

Delivered from the tossing surge,

Then shall we find—(please God !)

—it is enough ?

Not in this world of hope deferred,

This world of perishable stuff ;

Eye hath not seen, nor ear hath
heard,

Nor heart conceived that full
'enough' ;

Here moans the separating sea,

Here harvests fail, here breaks the
heart ;

There God shall join and no man
part,

All one in Christ, so one—(please
God !)—with me.

27 August 1857.

THIS near-at-hand land breeds pain
by measure :

That far-away land overflows with
treasure

Of heaped-up good pleasure.

Our land that we see is befouled by
evil :

The land that we see not makes
mirth and revel,

Far from death and devil.

This land hath for music sobbing and
sighing :

That land hath soft speech and sweet
soft replying

Of all loves undying.

This land hath for pastime errors and
follies :

That land hath unending unflagging
solace

Of full-chanted 'Holies.'

'Up and away,' call the Angels to
us ;

'Come to our home where no foes
pursue us,

And no tears bedew us ;

'Where that which riseth sets again
never,
Where that which springeth flows in
a river
For ever and ever ;

'Where harvest justifies labour of
sowing,
Where that which budded comes to
the blowing,
Sweet beyond your knowing.

'Come and laugh with us, sing in
our singing ;
Come, yearn no more, but rest in
your clinging.
See what we are bringing ;

'Crowns like our own crowns, robes
for your wearing ;
For love of you we kiss them in
bearing,
All good with you sharing :

'Over you gladdening, in you de-
lighting ;
Come from your famine, your failure,
your fighting ;
Come to full wrong-righting.

'Come, where all balm is garnered
to ease you ;
Come, where all beauty is spread out
to please you ;
Come, gaze upon Jesu.'

Circa 1877.

'Was Thy Wrath against the Sea?'

THE sea laments with unappeasable
Hankering wail of loss,
Lifting its hands on high and
passing by
Out of the lovely light :

No foambow any more may crest
that swell

Of clamorous waves which toss ;
Lifting its hands on high it
passes by
From light into the night.
Peace, peace, thou sea ! God's wis-
dom worketh well,
Assigns it crown or cross :
Lift we all hands on high, and
passing by
Attest—God doeth right.

Before 1893.

And there was no more Sea.

VOICES from above and from be-
neath,

Voices of creation near and far,
Voices out of life and out of death,
Out of measureless space,
Sun, moon, star,
In oneness of contentment
offering praise.

Heaven and earth and sea jubilant,
Jubilant all things that dwell
therein ;

Filled to fullest overflow they chant,
Still roll onward, swell,
Still begin
Never flagging praise intermin-
able.

Thou who must fall silent in a while,
Chant thy sweetest, gladdest, best,
at once ;

Sun thyself to-day, keep peace and
smile ;

By love upward send
Orisons,
Accounting love thy lot and
love thine end.

Before 1893.

ROSES on a brier,
 Pearls from out the bitter sea,
 Such is earth's desire
 However pure it be.

Neither bud nor brier,
 Neither pearl nor brine for me :
 Be stilled, my long desire ;
 There shall be no more sea.

Be stilled, my passionate heart ;
 Old earth shall end, new earth
 shall be :

Be still, and earn thy part
 Where shall be no more sea.

Before 1886.

WE are of those who tremble at Thy
 word ;
 Who faltering walk in darkness
 toward our close
 Of mortal life, by terrors curbed and
 spurred :
 We are of those.

We journey to that land which no
 man knows
 Who any more can make his voice
 be heard
 Above the clamour of our wants
 and woes.

Not ours the hearts Thy loftiest
 love hath stirred,
 Not such as we Thy lily and Thy
 rose :—

Yet, Hope of those who hope with
 hope deferred,
 We are of those.

Before 1893.

Awake thou that sleepest.

THE night is far spent, the day is at
 hand :

Let us therefore cast off the
 works of darkness,
 And let us put on the armour
 of light.

Night for the dead in their stiff-
 ness and starkness !

Day for the living who mount
 in their might
 Out of their graves to the beautiful
 land.

Far, far away lies the beautiful
 land :

Mount on wide wings of exceeding
 desire,

Mount, look not back, mount to
 life and to light,

Mount by the gleam of your lamps
 all on fire

Up from the dead men and up
 from the night.

The night is far spent, the day is at
 hand.

Before 1893.

WE know not when, we know not
 where,

We know not what that world will
 be ;

But this we know—it will be fair
 To see.

With heart athirst and thirsty face
 We know and know not what shall
 be :

Christ Jesus bring us of His grace
 To see.

Christ Jesus bring us of His grace,
Beyond all prayers our hope can
pray,
One day to see Him face to Face,
One day.

Before 1886.

I will lift up mine eyes unto the Hills.

WHEN sick of life and all the world—
How sick of all desire but Thee!—
I lift mine eyes up to the hills,

Eyes of my heart that see,
I see beyond all death and ills
Refreshing green for heart and eyes,
The golden streets and gateways
pearled,
The trees of Paradise.

‘There is a time for all things,’
saith

The Word of Truth, Thyself the
Word :

And many things Thou reasonest of :
A time for hope deferred,
But time is now for grief and
fears ;

A time for life, but now is death ;
Oh when shall be the time of love
When Thou shalt wipe our tears ?

Then the new Heavens and Earth
shall be

Where righteousness shall dwell in-
deed ;

There shall be no more blight, nor
need,

Nor barrier of the sea ;
No sun and moon alternating,
For God shall be the Light thereof ;
No sorrow more, no death, no sting,
For God Who reigns is Love.

Before 1886.

Then whose shall those things be ?

OH what is earth, that we should
build

Our houses here, and seek concealed
Poor treasure, and add field to field,
And heap to heap and store to
store,

Still grasping more and seeking
more,

While step by step Death nears the
door ?

16 July 1858.

His Banner over me was Love.

IN that world we weary to attain,
Love’s furred banner floats at large
unfurled ;

There is no more doubt and no more
pain

In that world.

There are gems and gold and
inlets pearled ;

There the verdure fadeth not again ;
There no clinging tendrils droop
uncurled.

Here incessant tides stir up the main,
Stormy miry depths aloft are
hurled :

There is no more sea, or storm, or
stain,

In that world.

Before 1886.

BELOVED, yield thy time to God, for
He

Will make eternity thy recom-
pense ;

Give all thy substance for His Love,
and be

Beatified past earth’s experience.

Serve Him in bonds, until He set
thee free ;

Serve Him in dust, until He lift
thee thence ;

Till death be swallowed up in
victory

When the great trumpet sounds to
bid thee hence.

Shall setting day win day that will
not set ?

Poor price wert thou to spend thy-
self for Christ,

Had not His wealth thy poverty
sufficed :

Yet since He makes His garden
of thy clod,

Water thy lily, rose, or violet,

And offer up thy sweetness unto
God.

Before 1893.

TIME seems not short :

If so I call to mind

Its vast prerogative to loose or
bind,

And bear and strike amont

All humankind.

Time seems not long :

If I peer out and see

Sphere within sphere, time in
eternity,

And hear the alternate song

Cry endlessly.

Time greatly short,

O time so briefly long,

Yea, time sole battle-ground of
right and wrong :

Art thou a time for sport

And for a song ?

Before 1893.

THE half moon shows a face of
plaintive sweetness

Ready and poised to wax or
wane ;

A fire of pale desire in incomplete-
ness,

Tending to pleasure or to pain :—

Lo while we gaze she rolleth on in
fleetness

To perfect loss or perfect gain.

Half bitterness we know, 'we know
half sweetness ;

This world is all on wax, on
wane :

When shall completeness round
time's incompleteness,

Fulfilling joy, fulfilling pain ?

Lo, while we ask, life rolleth on in
fleetness

To finished loss or finished gain.

Before 1893.

' As the Doves to their windows.'

THEY throng from the east and the
west,

The north and the south, with a
song ;

To golden abodes of their rest

They throng.

Eternity stretches out long :

Time, brief at its worst or its best,

Will quit them of ruin and wrong.

A rainbow aloft for their crest,

A palm for their weakness made
strong :

As doves breast all winds to their
nest,

They throng.

Before 1893.

OH knell of a passing time,
Will it never cease to chime ?
Oh stir of the tedious sea,
Will it never cease to be ?
Yea, when night and when day,
Moon and sun, pass away.

Surely the sun burns low,
The moon makes ready to go,
Broad ocean ripples to waste,
Time is running in haste,
Night is numbered, and day
Numbered to pass away.

Before 1893.

TIME passeth away with its pleasure
and pain,
Its garlands of cypress and bay,
With wealth and with want, with a
balm and a bane,
Time passeth away.

Eternity cometh to stay,
Eternity stayeth to go not again ;
Eternity barring the way,

Arresting all courses of planet or
main,

Arresting who plan or who pray,
Arresting creation : while grand in
its wane

Time passeth away.

Before 1893.

The Earth shall tremble at the Look
of Him.

TREMBLE, thou earth, at the Presence
of the Lord

Whose Will conceived thee and
brought thee to the birth,
Always, everywhere, thy Lord to be
adored :

Tremble, thou earth.

Wilt thou laugh time away in
music and mirth ?

Time hath days of pestilence, hath
days of a sword,

Hath days of hunger and thirst in
desolate dearth.

Till eternity wake up the multichord
Thrilled harp of heaven, and
breathe full its organ's girth

For joy of heaven and infinite
reward,

Tremble, thou earth.

Before 1893.

TIME lengthening, in the lengthening
seemeth long :

But ended Time will seem a little
space,

A little while from morn to evensong,
A little while that ran a rapid race ;

A little while, when once Eternity
Denies proportion to the other's
pace.

Eternity to be and be and be,
Ever beginning, never ending
still,

Still undiminished far as thought can
see ;

Farther than thought can see, by
dint of will

Strung up and strained and shooting
like a star

Past utmost bound of everlasting
hill :

Eternity unswaddled, without bar,
Finishing sequence in its awful
sum ;

Eternity still rolling forth its car,
Eternity still here and still to
come.

Before 1893.

All flesh is Grass.

So brief a life, and then an endless
life

Or endless death ;

So brief a life, then endless peace
or strife :

Whoso considereth

How man but like a flower

Or shoot of grass

Blooms an hour,

Well may sigh 'Alas !'

So brief a life, and then an endless
grief

Or endless joy ;

So brief a life, then ruin or relief :

What solace, what annoy

Of Time needs dwelling on ?

It is, it was,

It is done,

While we sigh 'Alas !'

Yet saints are singing in a happy
hope

Forecasting pleasure,

Bright eyes of faith enlarging all
their scope ;

Saints love beyond Time's
measure :

Where love is, there is bliss

That will not pass ;

Where love is,

Dies away 'Alas !'

'Before 1893.

HEAVEN'S chimes are slow, but sure
to strike at last :

Earth's sands are slow, but surely
dropping thro' :

And much we have to suffer,
much to do,

Before the time be past.

Chimes that keep time are neither
slow nor fast :

Not many are the numbered
sands nor few :

A time to suffer, and a time to do,
And then the time is past.

Before 1886.

There remaineth therefore a Rest to the
People of God.

REST remains when all is done,
Work and vigil, prayer and fast,
All fulfilled from first to last,
All the length of time gone past
And eternity begun.

Fear and hope and chastening rod
Urge us on the narrow way :
Bear we now as best we may
Heat and burden of to-day,
Struggling, panting up to God.

Before 1886.

PARTING after parting,
Sore loss and gnawing pain :
Meeting grows half a sorrow
Because of parting again.
When shall the day break
That these things shall not be ?
When shall new earth be ours
Without a sea,
And time that is not time
But eternity ?

To meet, worth living for ;
Worth dying for, to meet ;
To meet, worth parting for,
Bitter forgot in sweet :
To meet, worth parting before,
Never to part more.

June 1858 and June 1864.

They put their trust in Thee, and were not
confounded.

I.

TOGETHER once, but never more
While Time and Death run out
their runs :

Tho' sundered now as shore from
shore,

Together once.

Nor rising suns, nor setting suns,
Nor life renewed which springtide
bore,

Make one again Death's sundered
ones.

Eternity holds rest in store,
Holds hope of long reunions :
But holds it what they hungered for
Together once ?

II.

Whatso it be, howso it be, Amen.
Blessed it is, believing, not to see.
Now God knows all that is ; and we
shall, then,
Whatso it be.

God's Will is best for man whose
will is free.
God's Will is better to us, yea, than
ten
Desires whereof He holds and
weighs the key.

Amid her household cares He guides
the wren,
He guards the shiftty mouse from
poverty ;
He knows all wants, allots each
where and when,
Whatso it be.

Before 1886.

SHORT is time, and only time is
bleak ;

Gauge the exceeding height thou
hast to climb :

Long eternity is high to seek :
Short is time.

Time is shortening with the wintry
rime :

Pray and watch and pray, girt up
and meek ;

Praying, watching, praying, chime
by chime.

Pray by silence if thou canst not
speak :

Time is shortening ; pray on till
the prime :

Time is shortening ; soul, fulfil thy
week :

Short is time.

Before 1893.

For Each.

My harvest is done, its promise is
ended,

Weak and watery sets the sun,
Day and night in one mist are
blended,

My harvest is done.

Long while running, how short
when run,

Time to eternity has descended,
Timeless eternity has begun.

Was it the narrow way that I
wended ?

Snares and pits was it mine to
shun ?

The scythe has fallen, so long sus-
pended,

My harvest is done.

Before 1893.

For All.

Man's harvest is past, his summer
is ended,

Hope and fear are finished at last,
Day hath descended, night hath
ascended.

Man's harvest is past.

Time is fled that fled so fast :
All the un mended remains un mended,
The perfect, perfect : all lots are
cast.

Waiting till earth and ocean be
rended,

Waiting for call of the trumpet
blast,

Each soul at goal of that way it
wended,—

Man's harvest is past.

Before 1893.

ADVENT

THIS Advent moon shines cold and
clear,

These Advent nights are long ;
Our lamps have burned year after
year

And still their flame is strong.

'Watchman, what of the night ?' we
cry,

Heart-sick with hope deferred :

'No speaking signs are in the sky,'
Is still the watchman's word.

The Porter watches at the gate,

The servants watch within ;

The watch is long betimes and late,
The prize is slow to win.

'Watchman, what of the night ?'
But still

His answer sounds the same :

'No daybreak tops the utmost hill,
Nor pale our lamps of flame.'

One to another hear them speak
The patient virgins wise :

'Surely He is not far to seek'—

'All night we watch and rise.'

'The days are evil looking back,
The coming days are dim ;

Yet count we not His promise slack,
But watch and wait for Him.'

One with another, soul with soul,
They kindle fire from fire :

'Friends watch us who have touched
the goal.'

'They urge us, come up higher.'

'With them shall rest our waysore
feet,

With them is built our home,
With Christ.'—'They sweet, but
He most sweet,
Sweeter than honeycomb.'

There no more parting, no more pain,
The distant ones brought near,

The lost so long are found again,

Long lost but longer dear :

Eye hath not seen, ear hath not
heard,

Nor heart conceived that rest,

With them our good things long
deferred,

With Jesus Christ our Best.

We weep because the night is long,
We laugh for day shall rise,

We sing a slow contented song
And knock at Paradise.

Weeping we hold Him fast Who
wept

For us, we hold Him fast ;

And will not let Him go except
He bless us first or last.

Weeping we hold Him fast to-night ;
 We will not let Him go
 Till daybreak smite our wearied
 sight
 And summer smite the snow :
 Then figs shall bud, and dove with
 dove
 Shall coo the livelong day ;
 Then He shall say, ' Arise, My love,
 My fair one, come away.'
2 May 1858.

CHRISTIAN AND JEW

A DIALOGUE

' OH happy happy land !
 Angels like rushes stand
 About the wells of light.'—
 ' Alas, I have not eyes for this fair
 sight :
 Hold fast my hand.'—

' As in a soft wind, they
 Bend all one blessed way,
 Each bowed in his own glory,
 star with star.'—
 ' I cannot see so far ;
 Here shadows are.'—

' White-winged the cherubim,
 Yet whiter seraphim,
 Glow white with intense fire of
 love.'—
 ' Mine eyes are dim :
 I look in vain above,
 And miss their hymn.'—

' Angels, Archangels cry
 One to other ceaselessly
 (I hear them sing)
 One " Holy, Holy, Holy " to their
 King.'—
 ' I do not hear them, I.'—

' Joy to thee, Paradise,
 Garden and goal and nest !
 Made green for wearied eyes ;
 Much softer than the breast
 Of mother-dove clad in a rainbow's
 dyes.

' All precious souls are there
 Most safe, elect by grace,
 All tears are wiped for ever from
 their face :
 Untired in prayer
 They wait and praise
 Hidden for a little space.

' Boughs of the Living Vine,
 They spread in summer shine
 Green leaf with leaf :
 Sap of the Royal Vine, it stirs like
 wine
 In all both less and chief.

' Sing to the Lord,
 All spirits of all flesh, sing ;
 For He hath not abhorred
 Our low estate nor scorned our
 offering :
 Shout to our King.'—

' But Zion said :
 My Lord forgetteth me.
 Lo she hath made her bed
 In dust ; forsaken weepeth she
 Where alien rivers swell the
 sea.

' She laid her body as the ground,
 Her tender body as the ground
 to those
 Who passed ; her harpstrings cannot
 sound
 In a strange land ; discrowned
 She sits, and drunk with woes.'—

'O drunken not with wine,
Whose sins and sorrows have fulfilled the sum,—
Be not afraid, arise, be no more dumb;

Arise, shine,
For thy light is come.'—

'Can these bones live?'—

'God knows:

The prophet saw such clothed
with flesh and skin;

A wind blew on them, and life
entered in;

They shook and rose.

Hasten the time, O Lord, blot
out their sin,
Let life begin.'

9 July 1858.

A BURDEN

THEY lie at rest asleep and dead,
The dew is cool above their head,
They knew not when past summer
fled— *Amen.*

They lie at rest and quite forget
The hopes and fears that wring us
yet:

Their eyes are set, their heart is
set— *Amen.*

They lie with us, yet gone away
Hear nothing that we sob or say
Beneath the thorn of wintry May—
Miserere.

They lie asleep with us, and take
Sweet rest although our heart should
ache,
Rest on although our heart should
break— *Miserere.*

Together all yet each alone,
Each laid at rest beneath his own
Smooth turf or white appointed
stone— *Amen.*

When shall our slumbers be so deep,
And bleeding heart and eyes that
weep

Lie lapped in the sufficient sleep?—
Miserere.

We dream of them, and who shall say
They never dream while far away
Of us between the night and day?—
Sursum Corda.

Gone far away: or it may be
They lean toward us and hear and
see,

Yea and remember more than we—
Amen.

For wherefore should we think them
far

Who know not where those spirits are
That shall be glorious as a star?—
Hallelujah.

Where chill or change can never
rise,

Deep in the depth of Paradise
They rest world-wearied heart and
eyes— *Jubilate.*

Safe as a hidden brooding dove,
With perfect peace within, above,
They love, and look for perfect
love— *Hallelujah.*

We hope and love with throbbing
breast,

They hope and love and are at rest:
And yet we question which is best—
Miserere.

Oh what is earth, that we should
 build
 Our houses here, and seek concealed
 Poor treasure, and add field to field

And heap to heap and store to store,
 Still grasping more and seeking more
 While Death stands knocking at the
 door?— *Cui bono?*

But one will answer: Changed and
 pale
 And sick at heart, I thirst, I fail
 For love, I thirst without avail—
Miserrima.

Sweet love, a fountain sealed to me:
 Sweet love, the one sufficiency
 For all the longings that can be—
Amen.

Oh happy they alone whose lot
 Is love! I search from spot to spot:
 In life, in death, I find it not—
Miserrima.

Not found in life: nay verily.
 I too have sought: come sit with
 me,
 And grief for grief shall answer
 thee— *Miserrima.*

Sit with me where the sapless leaves
 Are heaped and sere: to him who
 grieves
 What cheer have last year's harvest-
 sheaves?— *Cui bono?*

Not found in life, yet found in death.
 Hush, throbbing heart and sobbing
 breath!
 There is a nest of love beneath

The sod, a home prepared before:
 Our brethren whom one mother bore
 Live there, and toil and ache no
 more— *Hallelujah.*

Our friends, our kinsfolk, great and
 small,
 Our loved, our best beloved of all,
 They watch across the parting wall

(Do they not watch?) and count the
 creep
 Of time, and sound the shallowing
 deep,
 Till we in port shall also sleep—
Hallelujah, Amen.

16 July 1858.

ONLY BELIEVE

I STOOD by weeping
 Yet a sorrowful silence keeping
 While an Angel smote my love
 As she lay sleeping.

'Is there a bed above
 More fragrant than these violets
 That are white like death?'

'White like a dove,
 Flowers in the blessed islets
 Breathe sweeter breath
 All fair morns and twilights.'

'Is the gold there
 More golden than these tresses?'

'There heads are aureoled
 And crowned like gold
 With light most rare.'

'Are the bowers of Heaven
 More choice than these?'

'To them are given
All odorous shady trees.
Earth's bowers are wildernesses,
Compared with the recesses
Made soft there now
Nest-like twixt bough and bough.'

'Who shall live in such a nest?'

'Heart with heart at rest :
All they whose troubles cease
In peace :
Souls that wrestled
Now are nestled
There at ease,—
Throng from east and west,
From north and south,
To plenty from the land of drouth.'

September 1858.

NEW JERUSALEM AND ITS CITIZENS

(From September 1858 to before 1893.)

The Holy City, New Jerusalem.

JERUSALEM is built of gold,
Of crystal, pearl, and gem :
Oh fair thy lustres manifold,
Thou fair Jerusalem !
Thy citizens who walk in white
Have nought to do with day or
night,
And drink the river of delight.

Jerusalem makes melody
For simple joy of heart ;
An organ of full compass she,
One-tuned thro' every part :
While not to day or night belong
Her matins and her evensong,
The one thanksgiving of her throng.

Jerusalem a garden is,
A garden of delight ;
Leaf, flower, and fruit, make fair her
trees,
Which see not day or night :
Beside her River clear and calm
The Tree of Life grows with the
Palm,
For triumph and for food and balm.

Jerusalem, where song nor gem
Nor fruit nor waters cease,
God bring us to Jerusalem,
God bring us home in peace ;
The strong who stand, the weak
who fall,
The first and last, the great and
small,
Home one by one, home one and
all.

Circa 1877.

WHEN wickedness is broken as a
tree
Paradise comes to light, ah holy
land !
Whence death has vanished like
a shifting sand,
And barrenness is banished with
the sea.
Its bulwarks are salvation fully
manned,
All gems it hath for glad variety,
And pearls for pureness radiant
glimmeringly,
And gold for grandeur where all
good is grand.
An inner ring of saints meets linked
above,
And linked of angels is an outer
ring ;
For voice of waters or for
thunders' voice

Lo harps and songs wherewith
 all saints rejoice,
 And all the trembling there of
 any string
 Is but a trembling of enraptured
 love.

Before 1893.

JERUSALEM of fire
 And gold and pearl and gem,
 Saints flock to fill thy choir,
 Jerusalem.

Lo, thrones thou hast for them ;
 Desirous they desire
 Thy harp, thy diadem,

Thy bridal white attire,
 A palm-branch from thy stem :
 Thy holiness their hire,
 Jerusalem.

Before 1893.

She shall be brought unto the King.

THE King's Daughter is all glorious
 within,

Her clothing of wrought gold sets
 forth her bliss ;

Where the endless choruses of
 heaven begin

The King's Daughter is ;

Perfect her notes in the perfect
 harmonies ;

With tears wiped away, no conscience
 of sin,

Loss forgotten and sorrowful
 memories ;

Alight with Cherubin, afire with
 Seraphin,

Lily for pureness, rose for charities,

With joy won and with joy evermore
 to win,
 The King's Daughter is.

Before 1893.

WHO is this that cometh up not
 alone

From the fiery - flying - serpent
 wilderness,
 Leaning upon her own Beloved
 One ?

Who is this ?

Lo, the King of kings' daughter,
 a high princess,
 Going home as bride to her Hus-
 band's Throne,
 Virgin queen in perfected loveli-
 ness.

Her eyes a dove's eyes and her
 voice a dove's moan,
 She shows like a full moon for
 heavenliness :

Eager saints and angels ask in
 heaven's zone,

Who is this ?

Before 1886.

WHO sits with the King in His
 Throne? Not a slave but a
 Bride,

With this King of all Greatness
 and Grace Who reigns not
 alone ;

His Glory her glory, where glorious
 she glows at His side

Who sits with the King in His
 Throne.

She came from dim uttermost
 depths which no Angel hath
 known,

Leviathan's whirlpool and Dragon's
dominion worldwide,
From the frost or the fire to
Paradisiacal zone.

Lo, she is fair as a dove, silvery,
golden, dove-eyed :

Lo, Dragon laments and Death
laments, for their prey is
flown :

She dwells in the Vision of Peace,
and her peace shall abide

Who sits with the King in His
Throne.

Before 1893.

Antipas.

HIDDEN from the darkness of our
mortal sight,

Hidden in the Paradise of lovely
light,

Hidden in God's Presence, wor-
shipped face to face,

Hidden in the sanctuary of Christ's
embrace.

Up, O Wills ! to track him home
among the blest ;

Up, O Hearts ! to know him in the
joy of rest ;

Where no darkness more shall hide
him from our sight,

Where we shall be love with love,
and light with light,

Worshiping our God together face
to face,

Wishless in the sanctuary of Christ's
embrace.

Before 1893.

' Beautiful for situation.'

A LOVELY city in a lovely land,
Whose citizens are lovely, and
whose King

Is Very Love ; to Whom all
Angels sing ;

To Whom all saints sing crowned,
their sacred band

Saluting Love with palm-branch in
their hand :

Thither all doves on gold or silver
wing

Flock home thro' agate windows
glistering

Set wide, and where pearl gates
wide open stand.

A bower of roses is not half so sweet,
A cave of diamonds doth not
glitter so,

Nor Lebanon is fruitful set
thereby :

And thither thou, beloved, and
thither I

May set our heart and set our
face and go,

Faint yet pursuing, home on tireless
feet.

Before 1893

LORD, by what inconceivable dim
road

Thou leadest man on footsore
pilgrimage !

Weariness is his rest from stage
to stage,

Brief halting-places are his sole
abode.

Onward he fares thro' rivers over-
flowed,

Thro' deserts where all doleful
creatures rage ;

Onward from year to year, from
age to age,

He groans and totters onward with
his load.

Behold how inconceivable his way ;
How tenfold inconceivable the
goal,

His goal of hope deferred, his
promised peace :

Yea, but behold him sitting
down at ease,

Refreshed in body and refreshed
in soul,

At rest from labour on the Sabbath
Day,

Before 1893.

As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good
news from a far country.

‘GOLDEN-HAIRED, lily-white,

Will you pluck me lilies ?

Or will you show me where they
grow,

Show where the limpid rill is ?

But is your hair of gold or light,

And is your foot of flake or fire,

And have you wings rolled up from
sight

And songs to slake desire ?’

‘I pluck fresh flowers of Paradise,

Lilies and roses red,

A bending sceptre for my hand,

A crown to crown my head.

I sing my songs, I pluck my flowers

Sweet-scented from their fragrant
trees ;

I sing, we sing, amid the bowers,

And gather palm-branches.’

‘Is there a path to Heaven

My stumbling foot may tread ?

And will you show that way to go,

That bower and blossom bed ?’

‘The path to Heaven is steep and
straight

And scorched, but ends in shade
of trees,

Where yet a while we sing and wait

And gather palm-branches.’

Before 1886.

R

CAST down but not destroyed,
chastened not slain :

Thy Saints have lived that life,
but how can I ?

I, who thro’ dread of death do
daily die

By daily foretaste of an unfelt pain.

Lo I depart who shall not come
again ;

Lo as a shadow I am flitting by ;

As a leaf trembling, as a wheel I
fly,

While death flies faster and my flight
is vain.

Chastened not slain, cast down but
not destroyed :—

If thus Thy Saints have struggled
home to peace,

Why should not I take heart
to be as they ?

They too pent passions in a
house of clay,

Fear and desire, and pangs and
ecstasies ;

Yea, thus they joyed who now are
overjoyed.

Before 1893.

LIFT up thine eyes to seek the in-
visible :

Stir up thy heart to choose the
still unseen :

Strain up thy hope in glad per-
petual green

To scale the exceeding height where
all saints dwell.

Saints, is it well with you ?—Yea, it
is well.—

Where they have reaped, by faith
kneel thou to glean :

Because they stooped so low to
reap, they lean

Now over golden harps unspeak-
able.—

P

But thou purblind and deafened,
knowest thou

Those glorious beauties unex-
perienced

By ear or eye or by heart
hitherto?—

I know Whom I have trusted: where-
fore now

All amiable, accessible tho' fenced,
Golden Jerusalem floats full in
view.

Before 1893.

Love is strong as Death.

As flames that consume the moun-
tains, as winds that coerce the
sea,

Thy men of renown show forth Thy
might in the clutch of death:

Down they go into silence, yet the
Trump of the Jubilee

Swells not Thy praise as swells it
the breathless pause of their
breath.

What is the flame of their fire, if so
I may catch the flame;

What the strength of their strength,
if also I may wax strong?

The flaming fire of their strength is
the love of Jesu's Name,

In Whom their death is life, their
silence utters a song.

Before 1893.

Let them rejoice in their beds.

CRIMSON as the rubies, crimson as
the roses,

Crimson as the sinking sun,
Singing on his crimsoned bed each
saint reposes,

Fought his fight, his battle won;

Till the rosy east the day of days
discloses,

All his work, save waiting, done.

Far above the stars, while under-
neath the daisies,

Resting, for his race is run,

Unto Thee his heart each quiet saint
upraises,

God the Father, Spirit, Son;

Unto Thee his heart, unto Thee his
praises,

O Lord God, the Three in One.

Before 1893.

SLAIN in their high places: fallen on
rest

Where the eternal peace lights up
their faces,

In God's sacred acre breast to
breast:—

Slain in their high places.

From all tribes, all families, all
races,

Gathered home together; east or
west

Sending home its tale of gifts and
graces.

Twine, oh twine, heaven's amaranth
for their crest,

Raise their praise while home their
triumph paces;

Kings by their own King of kings
confessed,

Slain in their high places.

Before 1893.

‘What hath God wrought!

THE shout of a King is among them.
One day may I be

Of that perfect communion of lovers
contented and free
In the land that is very far off, and
far off from the sea.

The shout of the King is among them.
One King and one song,
One thunder of manifold voices
harmonious and strong,
One King and one love, and one
shout of one worshiping throng.

Before 1893.

Before the Throne, and before the Lamb.
As the voice of many waters all
saints sing as one,
As the voice of an unclouded
thundering ;
Unswayed by the changing moon
and unswayed by the sun,
As the voice of many waters all
saints sing.

Circling round the rainbow of
their perfect ring,
Twelve thousand times twelve
thousand voices in unison
Swell the triumph, swell the praise
of Christ the King.

Where raiment is white of blood-
steeped linen slowly spun,
Where crowns are golden of
Love's own largessing,
Where eternally the ecstasy is but
begun,
As the voice of many waters all
saints sing.

Before 1893.

He shall go no more out.

ONCE within, within for evermore :
There the long beatitudes begin :

Overflows the still unwasting store,
Once within.

Left without are death and doubt
and sin ;
All man wrestled with and all he bore,
Man who saved his life, skin after
skin.

Blow the trumpet - blast unheard
before,
Shout the unheard-of shout for
these who win,
These, who cast their crowns on
Heaven's high floor
Once within.

Before 1893.

YEA, blessed and holy is he that hath
part in the First Resurrection !
We mark well his bulwarks, we set
up his tokens, we gaze, even we,
On this lustre of God and of Christ,
this creature of flawless per-
fection :

Yea, blessed and holy is he.

But what? an offscouring of earth,
a wreck from the turbulent sea,
A bloodstone unflinchingly hewn for
the Temple's eternal erection,
One scattered and peeled, one
sifted and chastened and
scourged and set free?

Yea, this is that worshipful stone
of the Wise Master Builder's
election,

Yea, this is that King and that
Priest where all Hallows bow
down the knee,

Yea, this man set nigh to the Throne
is Jonathan of David's delection,
Yea, blessed and holy is he.

Before 1893.

THE joy of Saints, like incense
turned to fire

In golden censers, soars acceptable;
And high their heavenly hal-
lujahs swell

Desirous still with still-fulfilled desire.
Sweet thrill the harpstrings of the
heavenly choir,

Most sweet their voice while love
is all they tell;

Where love is all in all, and all
is well

Because their work is love and love
their hire.

All robed in white and all with
palm in hand,

Crowns too they have of gold and
thrones of gold;

The street is golden which
their feet have trod,

Or on a sea of glass and fire they
stand:

And none of them is young, and
none is old,

Except as perfect by the Will
of God.

Before 1893.

WHAT are these lovely ones, yea,
what are these?

Lo these are they who for pure
love of Christ

Stripped off the trammels of soft
silken ease,

Beggaring themselves betimes, to
be sufficed

Throughout heaven's one eternal
day of peace:

By golden streets, thro' gates of
pearl unpriced,

They entered on the joys that will
not cease,

And found again all firstfruits
sacrificed.

And wherefore have you harps, and
wherefore palms,

And wherefore crowns, O ye who
walk in white?

Because our happy hearts are chant-
ing psalms,

Endless Te Deum for the ended
fight;

While thro' the everlasting lapse of
calms

We cast our crowns before the
Lamb our Might.

Before 1893.

The General Assembly and Church of
the Firstborn.

BRING me to see, Lord, bring me
yet to see

Those nations of Thy glory and
Thy grace

Who splendid in Thy splendour
worship Thee.

Light in all eyes, content in every
face,

Raptures and voices one while mani-
fold,

Love and are well-beloved the
ransomed race:—

Great mitred priests, great kings in
crowns of gold,

Patriarchs who head the army of
their sons,

Matrons and mothers by their own
extolled,

Wise and most harmless holy little
ones,

Virgins who, making merry, lead the
dance,

Full-breathed victorious racers
from all runs,

Home-comers out of every change
and chance,

Hermits restored to social neigh-
bourhood,

Aspects which reproduce One
 Countenance,
 Life-losers with their losses all
 made good,
 All blessed hungry and athirst
 sufficed,
 All who bore crosses round the
 Holy Rood,
 Friends, brethren, sisters, of Lord
 Jesus Christ.

Before 1893.

Every one that is perfect shall be as his
 Master.

How can one man, how can all men,
 How can we be like St. Paul,
 Like St. John, or like St. Peter,
 Like the least of all
 Blessed Saints? for we are small.

Love can make us like St. Peter,
 Love can make us like St. Paul,
 Love can make us like the blessed
 Bosom friend of all,
 Great St. John, tho' we are small.

Love which clings and trusts and
 worships,
 Love which rises from a fall,
 Love which, prompting glad obedi-
 ence,
 Labours most of all,
 Love makes great the great and
 small.

Before 1886.

'As dying, and behold we live!'
 So live the Saints while time is
 flying;
 Make all they make, give all they
 give,
 As dying;

Bear all they bear without reply-
 ing;
 They grieve as tho' they did not
 grieve,
 Uplifting praise with prayer and
 sighing.

Patient thro' life's long-drawn
 reprieve,
 Aloof from strife, at peace from
 crying,
 The morrow to its day they leave,
 As dying.

Before 1893.

So great a cloud of Witnesses.

I THINK of the saints I have known,
 and lift up mine eyes
 To the far-away home of beautiful
 Paradise,

Where the song of saints gives voice
 to an undividing sea

On whose plain their feet stand firm
 while they keep their jubilee.

As the sound of waters their voice,
 as the sound of thunders,

While they all at once rejoice, while
 all sing and while each one
 sings;

Where more saints flock in, and
 more, and yet more, and again
 yet more,

And not one turns back to depart
 thro' the open entrance-door.

O sights of our lovely earth, O
 sound of our earthly sea,
 Speak to me of Paradise, of all
 blessed saints to me:

Or keep silence touching them, and
 speak to my heart alone

Of the Saint of saints, the King of
 kings, the Lamb on the Throne.

Before 1893.

OUR Mothers, lovely women pitiful ;
Our Sisters, gracious in their life
and death ;

To us each unforgotten memory
saith :

‘ Learn as we learned in life’s
sufficient school,

Work as we worked in patience of
our rule,

Walk as we walked, much less
by sight than faith,

Hope as we hoped, despite our
slips and scathe,

Fearful in joy and confident in
dule.’

I know not if they see us or can
see ;

But if they see us in our painful
day,

How looking back to earth
from Paradise

Do tears not gather in those
loving eyes ?—

Ah happy eyes ! whose tears are
wiped away

Whether or not you bear to look
on me.

Before 1893.

SAFE where I cannot lie yet,

Safe where I hope to lie too,

Safe from the fume and the fret ;

You, and you,

Whom I never forget.

Safe from the frost and the snow,

Safe from the storm and the
sun,

Safe where the seeds wait to grow

One by one

And to come back in blow.

Before 1893.

‘ Is it well with the child ?’

LYING a-dying.

Have done with vain sighing :

Life not lost but treasured,

God Almighty pleased,

God’s daughter fetched and carried,

Christ’s bride betrothed and married.

Our tender little dove

Meek-eyed and simple,

Our love goes home to Love :

There shall she walk in white,

Where God shall be the Light,

And God the Temple.

3 November 1865.

DEAR Angels and dear disembodied
Saints

Unseen around us, worshiping in
rest,

May wonder that man’s heart so
often faints,

And his steps lag along the
heavenly quest,

What while his foolish fancy moulds
and paints

A fonder hope than all they
prove for best ;

A lying hope which undermines
and taints

His soul, as sin and sloth make
manifest.

Sloth, and a lie, and sin : shall
these suffice

The unfathomable heart of craving
man,

That heart which being a deep
calls to the deep ?

Behold how many like us rose
and ran

When Christ, Life-giver, roused
them from their sleep

To rise and run and rest in Paradise !

Before 1893.

To every seed his own body.'

BONE to his bone, grain to his grain of dust :

A numberless reunion shall make whole

Each blessed body for its blessed soul,

Refashioning the aspects of the just.

Each saint who died must live afresh, and must

Ascend resplendent in the aureole

Of his own proper glory to his goal,

As seeds their proper bodies all upthrust.

Each with his own not with another's grace,

Each with his own not with another's heart,

Each with his own not with another's face,

Each dove-like soul mounts to his proper place :—

O faces unforgotten ! if to part

Wrung sore, what will it be to re-embrace ?

Before 1893.

What good shall my life do me?

HAVE dead men long to wait?—

There is a certain term

For their bodies to the worm

And their souls at heaven gate :

Dust to dust, clod to clod,

These precious things of God,

Trampled underfoot by man

And beast the appointed years.—

Their longest life was but a span

For change and smiles and tears :

Is it worth while to live,

Rejoice and grieve,
Hope, fear, and die ?

Man with man, truth with lie,

The slow show dwindles by :

At last what shall we have

Besides a grave ?—

Lies and shows no more,

No fear, no pain,

But after hope and sleep

Dear joys again.

Those who sowed shall reap :

Those who bore

The Cross shall wear the Crown ;

Those who clomb the steep

There shall sit down.

The Shepherd of the sheep

Feeds His flock there ;

In watered pastures fair

They rest and leap.

'Is it worth while to live ?'

Be of good cheer :

Love casts out fear :

Rise up, achieve.

September 1858.

THE LOVE OF CHRIST WHICH PASSETH KNOW- LEDGE

I BORE with thee long weary days
and nights,

Through many pangs of heart,
through many tears ;

I bore with thee, thy hardness, cold-
ness, slights,

For three-and-thirty years.

Who else had dared for thee what I
have dared ?

I plunged the depth most deep
from bliss above ;

I not My flesh, I not My spirit
spared :

Give thou Me love for love.

For thee I thirsted in the daily
drouth,

For thee I trembled in the nightly
frost :

Much sweeter thou than honey to
My mouth :

Why wilt thou still be lost ?

I bore thee on My shoulders and
rejoiced :

Men only marked upon My
shoulders borne

The branding cross ; and shouted
hungry-voiced,

Or wagged their heads in scorn.

Thee did nails grave upon My hands,
thy name

Did thorns for frontlets stamp
between Mine eyes :

I, Holy One, put on thy guilt and
shame ;

I, God, Priest, Sacrifice.

A thief upon My right hand and
My left ;

Six hours alone, athirst, in misery :

At length in death one smote My
heart and cleft

A hiding-place for thee.

Nailed to the racking cross, than
bed of down

More dear, whereon to stretch
Myself and sleep :

So did I win a kingdom,—Share
My crown ;

A harvest,—Come and reap.

15 October 1858.

A SHADOW OF DOROTHEA

‘GOLDEN-HAIRED, lily-white,
Will you pluck me lilies ?

Or will you show me where they
grow,

Show where the summer rill is ?

But is your hair of gold or light,

And is your foot of flake or fire,

And have you wings rolled up from
sight,

And joy to slake desire ?’

‘I pluck young flowers of Paradise,
Lilies and roses red :

A sceptre for my hand,

A crown to crown my golden head.

Love makes me wise :

I sing, I stand,

I pluck palm-branches in the
sheltered land.’

‘Is there a path to heaven

My heavy foot may tread ?

And will you show that way to go,

That rose and lily bed ?

Which day of all these seven

Will lighten my heart of lead,

Will purge mine eyes and make me
wise,

Alive or dead ?’

‘There is a heavenward stair—

Mount, strain upwards, strain and
strain—

Each step will crumble to your foot

That never shall descend again.

There grows a tree from ancient
root

With healing leaves and twelvefold
fruit

In musical heaven-air :

Feast with me there.’

'I have a home on earth I cannot
leave,
I have a friend on earth I cannot
grieve :
Come down to me, I cannot mount
to you.'
'Nay, choose between us both,
Choose as you are lief or loth :
You cannot keep these things and
have me too.'

11 November 1858.

FOR HENRIETTA POLYDORE

ON the land and on the sea
Jesus keep both you and me :

Going out and coming in,
Christ keep us both from shame
and sin :

In this world, in the world to come,
Keep us safe and lead us home :

To-day in toil, to-night in rest,
Be best beloved and love us best.

16 January 1859.

ASH WEDNESDAY

JESUS, do I love Thee ?
Thou art far above me,
Seated out of sight,
Hid in heavenly light
Of most highest height.
Martyred hosts implore Thee,
Seraphs fall before Thee,
Angels and Archangels,
Cherub throngs adore Thee.
Blessed she that bore Thee !
All the saints approve Thee,
All the virgins love Thee.

I show as a blot
Blood hath cleansèd not,
As a barren spot
In thy fruitful lot ;
I, fig-tree fruit-unbearing,
Thou, righteous Judge unsparing :
What canst Thou do more to me
That shall not more undo me ?
Thy Justice hath a sound,
'Why cumbereth it the ground ?'
Thy Love with stirrings stronger
Pleads, 'Give it one year longer.'
Thou giv'st me time : but who
Save Thou shall give me dew,
Shall feed my root with blood
And stir my sap for good ?—
Oh by Thy gifts that shame me
Give more lest they condemn me.
Good Lord, I ask much of Thee,
But most I ask to love Thee :
Kind Lord, be mindful of me,
Love me and make me love Thee.

21 March 1859.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

BEFORE the paling of the stars,
Before the winter morn,
Before the earliest cock-crow
Jesus Christ was born :
Born in a stable,
Cradled in a manger,
In the world His hands had made
Born a stranger.

Priest and King lay fast asleep
In Jerusalem,
Young and old lay fast asleep
In crowded Bethlehem :
Saint and Angel, ox and ass,
Kept a watch together,
Before the Christmas daybreak
In the winter weather.

Jesus on his Mother's breast
 In the stable cold,
 Spotless Lamb of God was He,
 Shepherd of the fold ;
 Let us kneel with Mary Maid,
 With Joseph bent and hoary,
 With Saint and Angel, ox and ass,
 To hail the King of Glory.
26 August 1859.

CHRIST OUR ALL IN ALL

(From 26 August 1859 to before 1893.)

The ransomed of the Lord.

THY lovely saints do bring Thee love,
 Incense and joy and gold ;
 Fair star with star, fair dove with
 dove,
 Beloved by Thee of old.

I, Master, neither star nor dove,
 Have brought Thee sins and
 tears ;

Yet I too bring a little love
 Amid my flaws and fears.

A trembling love that faints and
 fails

Yet still is love of Thee,
 A wondering love that hopes and
 hails

Thy boundless Love of me ;
 Love kindling faith and pure desire,
 Love following on to bliss,
 A spark, O Jesu, from Thy fire,
 A drop from Thine abyss.

Before 1893.

LORD, we are rivers running to Thy
 sea,

Our waves and ripples all derived
 from Thee :

A nothing we should have, a nothing
 be,

Except for Thee.

Sweet are the waters of Thy shore-
 less sea,
 Make sweet our waters that make
 haste to Thee ;
 Pour in Thy sweetness, that our-
 selves may be
 Sweetness to Thee.

Before 1893.

An exceeding bitter cry.

CONTEMPT and pangs and haunting
 fears—

Too late for hope, too late for ease,
 Too late for rising from the
 dead ;

Too late, too late to bend my
 knees,

Or bow my head,
 Or weep, or ask for tears.

Hark ! . . . One I hear Who calls
 to me :

'Give Me thy thorn and grief
 and scorn,

Give Me thy ruin and regret.
 Press on thro' darkness toward
 the morn :

One loves thee yet :
 Have I forgotten thee ?'

Lord, Who art Thou ? Lord, is it
 Thou

My Lord and God Lord Jesus
 Christ ?

How said I that I sat alone
 And desolate and unsufficed ?

Surely a stone
 Would raise Thy praises now !
Before 1893.

O LORD, when Thou didst call me,
 didst Thou know

My heart disheartened thro' and
 thro',

Still hankering after Egypt full
in view
Where cucumbers and melons grow ?
—‘Yea, I knew.’—

But, Lord, when Thou didst choose
me, didst Thou know
How marred I was and withered
too,
Nor rose for sweetness nor for
virtue rue,
Timid and rash, hasty and slow ?
—‘Yea, I knew.’—

My Lord, when Thou didst love
me, didst Thou know
How weak my efforts were, how
few,
Tepid to love and impotent to
do,
Envious to reap while slack to sow ?
—‘Yea, I knew.’—

Good Lord, Who knowest what I
cannot know,
And dare not know, my false, my
true,
My new, my old ; Good Lord,
arise and do
If loving Thou hast known me so.
—‘Yea, I knew.’—

Before 1893.

Thou, God, seest me.

AH me that I should be
Exposed and open evermore to
Thee !—
‘Nay, shrink not from My light,
And I will make thee glorious in
My sight
With the overcoming Shulam-
ite.’—
Yea, Lord, Thou moulding me.

. . . Without a hiding-place
To hide me from the terrors of Thy
Face.—

‘Thy hiding-place is here
In Mine own heart, wherefore
the Roman spear
For thy sake I accounted dear.’—
My Jesus ! King of Grace.

. . . Without a veil, to give
Whiteness before Thy Face that I
might live.—

‘Am I too poor to dress
Thee in My royal robe of
righteousness ?
Challenge and prove My Love’s
excess.’—
Give, Lord, I will receive.

. . . Without a pool wherein
To wash my piteous self and make
me clean.—

‘My Blood hath washed away
Thy guilt, and still I wash thee
day by day :
Only take heed to trust and
pray.’—
Lord, help me to begin.
Before 1893.

LORD JESUS, who would think that
I am Thine ?
Ah who would think,
Who sees me ready to turn back or
sink,
That Thou art mine ?

I cannot hold Thee fast tho’ Thou
art mine :
Hold Thou me fast,
So earth shall know at last and
heaven at last
That I am Thine.
Before 1886.

The Name of Jesus.

JESUS, Lord God from all eternity,
Whom love of us brought down
to shame,
I plead Thy Life with Thee,
I plead Thy Death, I plead Thy
Name.

Jesus, Lord God of every living soul,
Thy Love exceeds its uttered fame,
Thy Will can make us whole,
I plead Thyself, I plead Thy Name.
Before 1886.

LORD God of Hosts, most Holy and
most High,
What made Thee tell Thy Name
of Love to me?
What made Thee live our life?
what made Thee die?
'My love of thee.'

I pitched so low, Thou so exceeding
high,
What was it made Thee stoop to
look at me
While flawless sons of God stood
wondering by?
'My love of thee.'

What is there which can lift me up
on high
That we may dwell together, Thou
with me,
When sin and death and suffering
are gone by?
'My love of thee.'

O Lord, what is that best thing hid
on high
Which makes heaven heaven as
Thou hast promised me,

Yea, makes it Christ to live and gain
to die?

'My love of thee.'

Before 1886.

'LORD, what have I that I may
offer Thee?

Look, Lord, I pray Thee, and see.'—

'What is it thou hast got?
Nay, child, what is it thou hast not?
Thou hast all gifts that I have given
to thee:

Offer them all to Me,
The great ones and the small;
I will accept them one and all.'—

'I have a will, good Lord, but it is
marred;
A heart both crushed and hard:
Not such as these the gift
Clean-handed lovely saints uplift.'—

'Nay, child, but wilt thou judge for
Me?

I crave not thine, but thee.'—

'Ah Lord Who lovest me!
Such as I have now give I Thee.'

Before 1886.

If I should say 'my heart is in my
home,'

I turn away from that high halidom
Where Jesus sits: for nowhere
else

But with its treasure dwells
The heart: this Truth and this
experience tells.

If I should say 'my heart is in a
grave,'

I turn away from Jesus risen to save:

I slight that death He died for me ;
I too deny to see
His beauty and desirability.

O Lord, Whose Heart is deeper than
my heart,
Draw mine to Thine to worship
where Thou art ;
For Thine own glory join the twain
Never to part again,
Nor to have lived nor to have
died in vain.

Before 1886.

LEAF from leaf Christ knows ;
Himself the Lily and the Rose :

Sheep from sheep Christ tells ;
Himself the Shepherd, no one else :

Star and star He names,
Himself outblazing all their flames :

Dove by dove He calls
To set each on the golden walls :

Drop by drop, He counts
The flood of ocean as it mounts :

Grain by grain, His hand
Numbers the innumerable sand.

Lord, I lift to Thee
In peace what is and what shall be :

Lord, in peace I trust
To Thee all spirits and all dust.

Circa 1877.

LORD, carry me.—Nay, but I grant
thee strength
To walk and work thy way to
Heaven at length.—

Lord, why then am I weak?—Be-
cause I give
Power to the weak, and bid the
dying live.—

Lord, I am tired.—He hath not
much desired
The goal who at the starting-point
is tired.—

Lord, dost Thou know?—I know
what is in man ;
What the flesh can, and what the
spirit can.—

Lord, dost Thou care?—Yea, for
thy gain or loss
So much I cared, it brought Me to
the Cross.—

Lord, I believe ; help Thou mine
unbelief.—
Good is the word ; but rise, for life
is brief.

The follower is not greater than the
Chief :
Follow thou Me along My way of
grief.

Before 1893.

LORD, I am here.—But, child, I look
for thee

Elsewhere and nearer Me.—

Lord, that way moans a wide in-
satiated sea :

How can I come to Thee?—

Set foot upon the water, test and see
If thou canst come to Me.—

Couldst Thou not send a boat to
carry me,
Or dolphin swimming free?—

Nay, boat nor fish if thy will faileth thee :

For My Will too is free.—

O Lord, I am afraid.—Take hold on Me :

I am stronger than the sea.—

Save, Lord, I perish.—I have hold of thee,

I made and rule the sea,

I bring thee to the haven where thou wouldst be.

Before 1893.

NEW creatures ; the Creator still the Same

For ever and for ever : therefore we

Win hope from God's unsearchable decree,

And glorify His still unchanging Name.

We too are still the same ; and still our claim,

Our trust, our stay, is Jesus, none but He :

He still the Same regards us, and still we

Mount toward Him in old love's accustomed flame.

We know Thy wounded Hands : and Thou dost know

Our praying hands, our hands that clasp and cling

To hold Thee fast and not to let Thee go.

All else be new then, Lord, as Thou hast said :

Since it is Thou, we dare not be afraid,

Our King of old and still our Self-same King.

Before 1893.

King of kings and Lord of lords.

Is this that Name as ointment pourèd forth

For which the virgins love Thee— King of kings

And Lord of lords? All Seraphs clad in wings ;

All Cherubs and all Wheels which south and north,

Which east and west turn not in going forth ;

All many-semblanced ordered Spirits, as rings

Of rainbow in unwonted fashionings,

Might answer, Yes. But we from south and north,

From east and west, a feeble folk who came

By desert ways in quest of land unseen,

A promised land of pasture ever green

And ever springing ever singing wave,

Know best Thy Name of Jesus : Blessed Name,

Man's life and resurrection from the grave.

Before 1893.

THY Name, O Christ, as incense streaming forth

Sweetens our names before God's Holy Face ;

Luring us from the south and from the north

Unto the sacred place.

In Thee God's promise is Amen and Yea.

What art Thou to us? Prize of every lot,

Shepherd and Door, our Life and
Truth and Way :—

Nay, Lord, what art Thou not ?

Before 1893.

The Good Shepherd.

‘O SHEPHERD with the bleeding
Feet,

Good Shepherd with the pleading
Voice,

What seekest Thou from hill to
hill ?

Sweet were the valley pastures, sweet
The sound of flocks that bleat their
joys,

And eat and drink at will.

Is one worth seeking, when Thou
hast of Thine

Ninety and nine ?’

‘How should I stay my bleeding
Feet,

How should I hush my pleading
Voice ?

I Who chose death and clomb
a hill,

Accounting gall and wormwood
sweet,

That hundredfold might bud My
joys

For love’s sake and good will.

I seek My one, for all there bide of
Mine

Ninety and nine.’

Before 1893.

‘Rejoice with Me.

‘LITTLE Lamb, who lost thee?’—

‘I myself, none other.’—

‘Little Lamb, who found thee?’—

‘Jesus, Shepherd, Brother.

Ah, Lord, what I cost Thee !

Canst Thou still desire ?’—

‘Still Mine arms surround thee,

Still I lift thee higher,

Draw thee nigher.’

Before 1893.

SHALL not the Judge of all the earth
do right ?

Yea, Lord, altho’ Thou say me
nay.

Shall not His Will be to me life and
light ?

Yea, Lord, altho’ Thou slay.

Yet, Lord, remembering turn and sift
and see,

Remember tho’ Thou sift me thro’,

Remember my desire, remember me,

Remember, Lord, and do.

Before 1886.

ME and my gift : kind Lord, behold,
Be not extreme to test or sift ;

Thy Love can turn to fire and gold
Me and my gift.

Myself and mine to Thee I lift :

Gather us to Thee from the cold

Dead outer world where dead
things drift.

If much were mine, then manifold

Should be the offering of my thrift :

I am but poor, yet love makes bold

Me and my gift.

Before 1893.

‘He cannot deny Himself.’

LOVE still is Love, and doeth all
things well,

Whether He show me heaven or hell,

Or earth in her decay

Passing away

On a day.

Love still is Love, tho' He should
 say 'Depart,'
 And break my incorrigible heart,
 And set me out of sight,
 Widowed of light
 In the night.

Love still is Love, is Love, if He
 should say,
 'Come,' on that uttermost dread
 day;
 'Come,' unto very me,
 'Come where I be,
 Come and see.'

Love still is Love, whatever comes
 to pass :
 O Only Love, make me Thy glass,
 Thy pleasure to fulfil
 By loving still,
 Come what will.

Before 1893.

Slain from the foundation of the world.

SLAIN for man, slain for me, O
 Lamb of God, look down ;
 Loving to the end, look down,
 behold and see :

Turn Thine Eyes of pity, turn not
 on us Thy frown,
 O Lamb of God, slain for man,
 slain for me.

Mark the wrestling, mark the race
 for indeed a crown ;
 Mark our chariots how we drive
 them heavily ;
 Mark the foe upon our track blasting
 thundering down,
 O Lamb of God, slain for man,
 slain for me.

Set as a Cloudy Pillar against them
 Thy frown,
 Thy Face of Light toward us
 gracious utterly ;
 Help granting, hope granting, until
 Thou grant a crown,
 O Lamb of God, slain for man,
 slain for me.

Before 1893.

LORD JESU, Thou art sweetness to
 my soul :
 I to myself am bitterness :
 Regard my fainting struggle toward
 the goal,
 Regard my manifold distress,
 O Sweet Jesu.

Thou art Thyself my goal, O Lord
 my King :
 Stretch forth Thy hand to save
 my soul :
 What matters more or less of
 journeying ?
 While I touch Thee I touch my
 goal,
 O Sweet Jesu.

Before 1893.

'I, LORD, Thy foolish sinner low
 and small,
 Lack all.
 His heart too high was set
 Who asked, What lack I yet ?
 Woe's me at my most woeful pass !
 I, Lord, who scarcely dare adore,
 Weep sore :
 Steeped in this rotten world I fear
 to rot.
 Alas what lack I not ?
 Alas alas for me ! alas
 More and yet more !'—

'Nay, stand up on thy feet, betaking
thee

To Me.

Bring fear ; but much more bring
Hope to thy patient King :
What, is My pleasure in thy death ?
I loved that youth who little knew
The true

Width of his want, yet worshipped
with goodwill :

So love I thee, and still
Prolong thy day of grace and breath.
Rise up and do.'—

'Lord, let me know mine end, and
certify

When I
Shall die and have to stand
Helpless on Either Hand,
Cut off, cut off, my day of grace.'—
'Not so : for what is that to thee ?
I see

The measure and the number of thy
day.

Keep patience, tho' I slay ;
Keep patience till thou see My Face.
Follow thou Me.'

Before 1893.

'Because He first loved us.'

'I WAS hungry, and Thou feddest me ;
Yea, Thou gavest drink to slake
my thirst :

O Lord, what love gift can I offer
Thee
Who hast loved me first ?'—

'Feed My hungry brethren for My
sake ;

Give them drink, for love of them
and Me :

Love them as I loved thee, when
Bread I brake

In pure love of thee.'—

R

'Yea, Lord, I will serve them by
Thy grace ;

Love Thee, seek Thee, in them ;
wait and pray :

Yet would I love Thyself, Lord,
face to face,
Heart to heart, one day.'—

'Let to-day fulfil its daily task,
Fill thy heart and hand to them
and Me :

To-morrow thou shalt ask, and shalt
not ask
Half I keep for thee.'

Before 1893.

LORD, hast Thou so loved us, and
will not we

Love Thee with heart and mind
and strength and soul,

Desiring Thee beyond our glorious
goal,

Beyond the heaven of heavens
desiring Thee ?

Each saint, all saints cry out : Yea
me, yea me,

Thou hast desired beyond an
aureole,

Beyond Thy many Crowns, beyond
the whole

Ninety and nine unwandering family.
Souls in green pastures of the watered
land,

Faint pilgrim souls wayfaring thro'
the sand,

Abide with Thee and in Thee are
at rest :

Yet evermore, kind Lord, renew
Thy quest

After new wanderers ; such as once
Thy Hand

Gathered, Thy Shoulders bore,
Thy Heart caressed.

Before 1893.

Q

As the dove, which found no rest
For the sole of her foot, flew back
To the ark her only nest

And found safety there ;
Because Noah put forth his hand,
Drew her in from ruin and wrack,
And was more to her than the land
And the air :

So my spirit, like that dove,
Fleeth away to an ark
Where dwelleth a Heart of Love,
A Hand pierced to save,
Tho' the sun and the moon should
fail,
Tho' the stars drop into the dark,
And my body lay itself pale
In a grave.

Before 1893.

Thou art Fairer than the children of men.

A ROSE, a lily, and the Face of
Christ,

Have all our hearts sufficed :
For He is Rose of Sharon nobly born,
Our Rose without a thorn ;
And He is Lily of the Valley, He
Most sweet in purity.

But when we come to name Him as
He is,
Godhead, Perfection, Bliss,
All tongues fall silent, while pure
hearts alone
Complete their orison.

Before 1886.

' As the Apple Tree among the trees of
the wood.'

As one red rose in a garden where
all other roses are white
Blossoms alone in its glory,
crowned all alone

In a solitude of own sweetness and
fragrance of own delight,
With loveliness not another's and
thorns its own ;

As one ruddy sun amid million orbs
comely and colourless,
Among all others, above all others
is known ;

As it were alone in the garden, alone
in the heavenly place,
Chief and centre of all, in fellow-
ship yet alone.

Before 1893.

NONE other Lamb, none other Name,
None other Hope in heaven or
earth or sea,
None other Hiding-place from guilt
and shame,
None beside Thee.

My faith burns low, my hope burns
low,
Only my heart's desire cries out in
me
By the deep thunder of its want and
woe,
Cries out to Thee.

Lord, Thou art Life tho' I be dead,
Love's Fire Thou art, however
cold I be :
Nor heaven have I, nor place to lay
my head,
Nor home, but Thee.

Before 1893.

Thy Friend and thy Father's Friend
forget not.

FRIENDS, I commend to you the
narrow way ;
Not because I, please God, will
walk therein,

But rather for the Love Feast of
that day,

The exceeding prize which whoso
will may win.

Earth is half spent and rotting at
the core,

Here hollow death's heads mock
us with a grin,

Here heartiest laughter leaves us
tired and sore.

Men heap up pleasures and en-
large desire,

Outlive desire, and famished ever-
more

Consume themselves within the
undying fire.

Yet not for this God made us : not
for this

Christ sought us far and near to
draw us nigher,

Sought us and found and paid our
penalties.

If one could answer 'Nay' to
God's command,

Who shall say 'Nay' when Christ
pleads all He is

For us, and holds us with a
wounded Hand?

26 August 1859.

Surely He hath borne our griefs.

CHRIST'S Heart was wrung for me,
if mine is sore ;

And if my feet are weary, His
have bled ;

He had no place wherein to lay
His Head ;

If I am burdened, He was burdened
more.

The cup I drink He drank of long
before ;

He felt the unuttered anguish
which I dread ;

He hungered Who the hungry
thousands fed,

And thirsted Who the world's re-
freshment bore.

If grief be such a looking-glass as
shows

Christ's Face and man's in some
sort made alike,

Then grief is pleasure with a
subtle taste :

Wherefore should any fret or
faint or haste?

Grief is not grievous to a soul that
knows

Christ comes,—and listens for
that hour to strike.

Before 1886.

They toil not neither do they spin.

CLOTHES of the lily, Feeder of the
sparrow,

Father of the fatherless, dear Lord,
Tho' Thou set me as a mark against

Thine arrow,

As a prey unto Thy sword,
As a ploughed-up field beneath Thy

harrow,

As a captive in Thy cord,
Let that cord be love ; and some

day make my narrow

Hallowed bed according to Thy
Word. Amen.

Before 1893.

DARKNESS and light are both alike
to Thee :

Therefore to Thee I lift my
darkened face ;

Upward I look with eyes that fail to
see,

Athirst for future light and present
grace.

I trust the Hand of Love I scarcely
trace.
With breath that fails I cry, Re-
member me :
Add breath to breath so I may
run my race
That where Thou art there may Thy
servant be.
For Thou art gulf and fountain of
my love,
I unreturning torrent to Thy sea,
Yea Thou the measureless
ocean for my rill :
Seeking I find, and finding
seek Thee still :
And oh that I had wings as hath a
dove,
Then would I flee away to rest
with Thee.

Before 1886.

'And now why tarriest thou?'

LORD, grant us grace to mount by
steps of grace
From grace to grace nearer, my
God, to Thee ;
Not tarrying for to-morrow,
Lest we lie down in sorrow
And never see
Unveiled Thy Face.

Life is a vapour vanishing in haste ;
Life is a day whose sun grows
pale to set ;
Life is a stint and sorrow,
One day and not the morrow ;
Precious, while yet
It runs to waste.

Lord, strengthen us ; lest fainting
by the way
We come not to Thee, we who
come from far ;

Lord, bring us to that morrow
Which makes an end of sorrow,
Where all saints are
On holyday.

Where all the saints rest who have
heard Thy call,
Have risen and striven and now
rejoice in rest :
Call us too home from sorrow
To rest in Thee to-morrow ;
In Thee our Best,
In Thee our All.

Before 1893.

HAVE I not striven, my God, and
watched and prayed ?
Have I not wrestled in mine
agony ?
Wherefore still turn Thy Face of
Grace from me ?
Is Thine Arm shortened that Thou
canst not aid ?
Thy silence breaks my heart : speak
tho' to upbraid,
For Thy rebuke yet bids us follow
Thee.
I grope and grasp not ; gaze, but
cannot see.
When out of sight and reach my
bed is made,
And piteous men and women cease
to blame,
Whispering and wistful of my
gain or loss ;
Thou Who for my sake once
didst feel the Cross,
Lord, wilt Thou turn and look
upon me then,
And in Thy Glory bring to nought
my shame,
Confessing me to angels and to
men ?

30 September 1863.

God is our Hope and Strength.

TEMPEST and terror below ; but
Christ the Almighty above.

Tho' the depth of the deep over-
flow, tho' fire run along on the
ground,

Tho' all billows and flames make a
noise,—and where is an Ark
for the dove?—

Tho' sorrows rejoice against joys,
and death and destruction
abound :

Yet Jesus abolisheth death, and
Jesus Who loves us we love ;
His dead are renewed with a
breath, His lost are the sought
and the found.

Thy wanderers call and recall, Thy
dead men lift out of the ground ;

O Jesus, Who lovest us all, stoop
low from Thy Glory above :

Where sin hath abounded make
grace to abound and to super-
abound,

Till we gaze on Thee face unto Face,
and respond to Thee love unto
Love.

Before 1893.

DAY and night the Accuser makes
no pause,

Day and night protest the Righteous
Laws,

Good and Evil witness to man's
flaws ;

Man the culprit, man's the ruined
cause,

Man midway to death's devouring
jaws

And the worm that gnaws.

Day and night our Jesus makes no
pause,

Pleads His own fulfilment of all laws,
Veils with His Perfections mortal
flaws,

Clears the culprit, pleads the
desperate cause,

Plucks the dead from death's de-
vouring jaws

And the worm that gnaws.

Before 1893.

O MINE enemy

Rejoice not over me !

Jesus waiteth to be gracious :

I will yet arise,

Mounting free and far,

Past sun and star,

To a house prepared and spacious

In the skies.

Lord, for Thine own sake

Kindle my heart and break ;

Make mine anguish efficacious

Wedded to Thine own :

Be not Thy dear pain,

Thy Love, in vain,

Thou Who waitest to be gracious

On Thy Throne.

Before 1893.

LORD, dost Thou look on me, and
will not I

Launch out my heart to Heaven
to look on Thee ?

Here if one loved me I should
turn to see,

And often think on him and often
sigh,

And by a tender friendship make
reply

To love gratuitous poured forth
on me,

And nurse a hope of happy days
to be,

And mean 'until we meet' in each
good-bye.

Lord, Thou dost look and love is in
Thine Eyes,

Thy heart is set upon me day
and night,

Thou stoopest low to set me
far above :

O Lord, that I may love Thee make
me wise ;

That I may see and love Thee
grant me sight ;

And give me love that I may
give Thee love.

Before 1893.

Peace I leave with you.

TUMULT and turmoil, trouble and
toil,

Yet peace withal in a painful
heart ;

Never a grudge and never a broil,
And ever the better part.

O my King and my heart's own
choice,

Stretch Thy Hand to Thy flutter-
ing dove ;

Teach me, call to me with Thy
Voice,

Wrap me up in Thy Love.

Before 1893.

O CHRIST our All in each, our All
in all !

Others have this or that, a love,
a friend,

A trusted teacher, a long-worked-
for end :

But what to me were Peter or were
Paul

Without Thee ? fame or friend if
such might be ?

Thee wholly will I love, Thee
wholly seek,
Follow Thy foot-track, hearken for
Thy call.

O Christ mine All in all, my
flesh is weak,

A trembling fawning tyrant unto
me :

Turn, look upon me, let me
hear Thee speak :

Tho' bitter billows of Thine
utmost sea

Swathe me, and darkness build
around its wall,

Yet will I rise, Thou lifting when I
fall,

And if Thou hold me fast, yet
cleave to Thee.

Before 1886.

BECAUSE Thy Love hath sought
me,

All mine is Thine and Thine is
mine :

Because Thy Blood hath bought
me,

I will not be mine own but Thine.

I lift my heart to Thy Heart,

Thy Heart sole resting-place for
mine :

Shall Thy Heart crave for my heart,
And shall not mine crave back
for Thine ?

Before 1893.

THY fainting spouse, yet still Thy
spouse ;

Thy trembling dove, yet still Thy
dove ;

Thine own by mutual vows,
By mutual love.

Recall Thy vows, if not her vows ;
 Recall Thy Love, if not her love :
 For weak she is, Thy spouse,
 And tired, Thy dove.

Before 1893.

Like as the hart desireth the water brooks.

My heart is yearning :
 Behold my yearning heart,
 And lean low to satisfy
 Its lonely beseeching cry,
 For Thou its fulness art.

Turn, as once turning
 Thou didst behold Thy Saint
 In deadly extremity ;
 Didst look, and win back to
 Thee
 His will frightened and faint.

Kindle my burning
 From Thine unkindled Fire ;
 Fill me with gifts and with
 grace
 That I may behold Thy Face,
 For Thee I desire.

My heart is yearning,
 Yearning and thrilling thro'
 For Thy Love mine own of
 old,
 For Thy Love unknown, un-
 told,
 Ever old, ever new.

Before 1893.

That where I am, there ye may be also.

How know I that it looms lovely
 that land I have never seen,
 With morning-glories and heartsease
 and unexampled green,
 With neither heat nor cold in the
 balm-redolent air ?

Some of this, not all, I know ;
 but this is so ;
 Christ is there.

How know I that blessedness befalls
 who dwell in Paradise,
 The outwearied hearts refreshing,
 rekindling the worn-out eyes,
 All souls singing, seeing, rejoicing
 everywhere ?

Nay, much more than this I
 know ; for this is so ;
 Christ is there.

O Lord Christ, Whom having not
 seen I love and desire to
 love,

O Lord Christ, Who lookest on me
 uncomely yet still Thy dove,
 Take me to Thee in Paradise, Thine
 own made fair ;

For whatever else I know, this
 thing is so ;
 Thou art there.

Before 1893.

Judge not according to the appearance.

LORD, purge our eyes to see
 Within the seed a tree,
 Within the glowing egg a bird,
 Within the shroud a butterfly :

Till taught by such, we see
 Beyond all creatures Thee,
 And hearken for Thy tender
 word,
 And hear it, 'Fear not : it is I.'

Before 1893.

My God, wilt Thou accept, and will
 not we

Give aught to Thee ?

The kept we lose, the offered we
 retain
 Or find again.

Yet if our gift were lost, we well
might lose

All for Thy use :

Well lost for Thee Whose love is
all for us

Gratuitous.

Before 1893.

A CHILL blank world. Yet over
the utmost sea

The light of a coming dawn is
rising to me,

No more than a paler shade of
darkness as yet ;

While I lift my heart, O Lord, my
heart unto Thee

Who hast not forgotten me, yea,
Who wilt not forget.

Forget not Thy sorrowful servant,
O Lord my God,

Weak as I cry, faint as I cry under-
neath Thy rod,

Soon to lie dumb before Thee a
body devoid of breath,

Dust to dust, ashes to ashes, a sod
to the sod :

Forget not my life, O my Lord,
forget not my death.

Before 1893.

The Chiefest among ten thousand.

O JESU, better than Thy gifts

Art Thou Thine only Self to us !

Palm branch its triumph, harp uplifts

Its triumph-note melodious :

But what are such to such as we ?

O Jesu, better than Thy saints

Art Thou Thine only Self to us !

The heart faints and the spirit faints

For only Thee all-Glorious,

For Thee, O only Lord, for

Thee.

Before 1893.

EASTER EVEN

THERE is nothing more that they
can do

For all their rage and boast :

Caiaphas with his blaspheming
crew,

Herod with his host ;

Pontius Pilate in his judgment hall

Judging their Judge and his,

Or he who led them all and passed
them all,

Arch-Judas with his kiss.

The sepulchre made sure with
ponderous stone,

Seal that same stone, O priest :

It may be thou shalt block the
Holy One

From rising in the east.

Set a watch about the sepulchre

To watch on pain of death :

They must hold fast the stone if
One should stir

And shake it from beneath.

God Almighty, He can break a seal,

And roll away a stone :

Can grind the proud in dust who
would not kneel,

And crush the mighty one.

There is nothing more that they
can do

For all their passionate care,

Those who sit in dust, the blessed
few,

And weep and rend their hair—

Peter, Thomas, Mary Magdalen,

The Virgin unproved,

Joseph and Nicodemus foremost
men,

And John the well-beloved.

Bring your finest linen and your
spice,
Swathe the sacred Dead,
Bind with careful hands and piteous
eyes

The napkin round His head :

Lay Him in the garden-rock to rest :
Rest you the Sabbath length :
The Sun that went down crimson in
the west
Shall rise renewed in strength.

God Almighty shall give joy for
pain,
Shall comfort him who grieves :
Lo He with joy shall doubtless come
again
And with Him bring His sheaves.
23 March 1861.

THE OFFERING OF THE NEW LAW

ONCE I thought to sit so high
In the palace of the sky :
Now I thank God for His grace
If I may fill the lowest place.

Once I thought to scale so soon
Heights above the changing moon :
Now I thank God for delay :—
To-day : it yet is called to-day.

While I stumble, halt and blind,
Lo He waiteth to be kind :
Bless me soon or bless me slow—
Except He bless I let not go.

Once for earth I laid my plan,
Once I leaned on strength of man :
When my hope was swept aside
I stayed my broken heart on pride :

Broken reed hath pierced my hand,
Fell my house I built on sand,
Roofless, wounded, maimed by sin,
Fightings without and fears within.

Yet, His tree, He feeds my root :
Yet, His branch, He prunes for fruit :
Yet, His sheep, these eves and
morns
He seeks for me among the thorns.

With Thine Image stamped of old,
Find Thy coin more choice than
gold :
Known to Thee by name, recall
To Thee Thy homesick prodigal.

Sacrifice and offering
None there is that I can bring—
None save what is Thine alone :
I bring Thee, Lord, but of Thine
own.

Broken Body, Blood outpoured,
These I bring, my God, my Lord ;
Wine of Life and Living Bread,
With these for me Thy board is
spread.
23 May 1861.

BY THE WATERS OF BABYLON

By the waters of Babylon
We sit down and weep,
Far from the pleasant land
Where our fathers sleep :
Far from our Holy Place
From which the Glory is gone :
We sit in dust and weep
By the waters of Babylon.

By the waters of Babylon
The willow-trees grow rank :

We hang our harps thereon
 Silent upon the bank.
 Before us the days are dark,
 And dark the days that are gone :
 We grope in the very dark
 By the waters of Babylon.

By the waters of Babylon
 We thirst for Jordan yet,
 We pine for Jerusalem
 Whereon our hearts are set :
 Our priests defiled and slain,
 Our princes ashamed and gone,
 Oh how should we forget
 By the waters of Babylon ?

By the waters of Babylon
 Though the wicked grind the just,
 Our seed shall yet strike root
 And shall shoot up from the dust :
 The captive shall lead captive,
 The slave rise up and begone,
 And thou too shalt sit in dust,
 O daughter of Babylon.

1 December 1861.

WITHIN THE VEIL

SHE holds a lily in her hand,
 Where long ranks of Angels stand :
 A silver lily for her wand.

All her hair falls sweeping down,
 Her hair that is a golden brown,
 A crown beneath her golden crown.

Blooms a rose-bush at her knee,
 Good to smell and good to see :
 It bears a rose for her, for me :

Her rose a blossom richly grown,
 My rose a bud not fully blown
 But sure one day to be mine own.

13 December 1861.

GOOD FRIDAY

AM I a stone, and not a sheep,
 That I can stand, O Christ,
 beneath Thy cross,
 To number drop by drop Thy
 Blood's slow loss,
 And yet not weep ?

Not so those women loved
 Who with exceeding grief la-
 mented Thee ;
 Not so fallen Peter weeping
 bitterly ;
 Not so the thief was moved ;

Not so the Sun and Moon
 Which hid their faces in a star-
 less sky,
 A horror of great darkness at broad
 noon—
 I, only I.

Yet give not o'er,
 But seek Thy sheep, true Shepherd
 of the flock ;
 Greater than Moses, turn and look
 once more
 And smite a rock.

20 April 1862.

OUT OF THE DEEP

HAVE mercy, Thou my God—mercy,
 my God !

For I can hardly bear life day by
 day.

Be I here or there, I fret myself
 away :

Lo for Thy staff I have but felt Thy
 rod

Along this tedious desert-path long
 trod.

When will Thy judgment judge
me, yea or nay?

I pray for grace: but then my
sins unpray

My prayer: on holy ground I fool
stand shod—

While still Thou haunt'st me, faint
upon the cross,

A sorrow beyond sorrow in Thy
look,

Unutterable craving for my
soul.

All-faithful Thou, Lord: I, not
Thou, forsook

Myself: I traitor slunk back
from the goal:

Lord, I repent—help Thou my
helpless loss.

17 December 1862.

FOR A MERCY RECEIVED

THANK God who spared me what
I feared!

Once more I gird myself to run.

Thy promise stands, Thou Faith-
ful One.

Horror of darkness disappeared

At length: once more I see the
sun,

And dare to wait in hope for Spring,
To face and bear the Winter's
cold:

The dead cocoon shall yet unfold

And give to light the living wing:

There's hidden sap beneath the
mould.

My God, how could my courage
flag

So long as Thou art still the
same?

For what were labour, failure,
shame,

Whilst Thy sure promise doth not
lag,

And Thou dost shield me with
Thy Name?

Yet am I weak, my faith is weak,

My heart is weak that pleads with
Thee:

O Thou that art not far to seek,

Turn to me, hearken when I speak,
Stretch forth Thy hand to succour
me.

Through many perils have I past,

Deaths, plagues, and wonders,
have I seen:

Till now Thy hand hath held me
fast:

Lord, help me, hold me, to the last:
Still be what Thou hast always
been.

Open Thy Heart of Love to me,

Give me Thyself, keep nothing
back,

Even as I give myself to Thee.

Love paid by love doth nothing
lack,

And Love to pay love is not slack.

Love doth so grace and dignify

That beggars sue as king with
king

Before the Throne of Grace on high:

My God, be gracious to my cry:

My God, accept what gift I
bring:—

A heart that loves: though soiled
and bruised,

Yet chosen by Thee in time of
yore.

Who ever came and was refused
By thee? Do, Lord, as Thou art
used
To do, and make me love Thee
more.

13 January 1863.

MARTYRS' SONG

WE meet in joy, though we part in
sorrow ;
We part to-night, but we meet
to-morrow.
Be it flood or blood the path that's
trod,
All the same it leads home to God :
Be it furnace-fire voluminous,
One like God's Son will walk with
us.

What are these that glow from afar,
These that lean over the golden bar,
Strong as the lion, pure as the dove,
With open arms and hearts of love ?
They the blessed ones gone before,
They the blessed for evermore.
Out of great tribulation they went
Home to their home of Heaven-
content ;
Through flood or blood or furnace-
fire,
To the rest that fulfils desire.

What are these that fly as a cloud,
With flashing heads and faces bowed,
In their mouths a victorious psalm,
In their hands a robe and a palm ?
Welcoming angels these that shine,
Your own angel, and yours, and
mine ;
Who have hedged us both day and
night
On the left hand and on the right,

Who have watched us both night
and day
Because the devil keeps watch to
slay.

Light above light, and Bliss beyond
bliss,
Whom words cannot utter, lo Who is
This ?

As a King with many crowns He
stands,
And our names are graven upon His
hands :

As a Priest, with God-uplifted eyes,
He offers for us His Sacrifice ;
As the Lamb of God for sinners
slain,

That we too may live He lives
again ;

As our Champion behold Him stand,
Strong to save us, at God's Right
Hand.

God the Father give us grace
To walk in the light of Jesus' Face :
God the Son give us a part
In the hiding-place of Jesus' Heart :
God the Spirit so hold us up
That we may drink of Jesus' cup.

Death is short, and life is long ;
Satan is strong, but Christ more
strong.

At His Word Who hath led us
hither

The Red Sea must part hither and
thither.

At His Word Who goes before us
too

Jordan must cleave to let us through.

Yet one pang searching and sore,
And then Heaven for evermore :
Yet one moment awful and dark,

Then safety within the Veil and the
Ark ;

Yet one effort by Christ His grace,
Then Christ for ever face to face.

God the Father we will adore,
In Jesus' Name, now and evermore :
God the Son we will love and thank
In this flood and on the farther bank ;
God the Holy Ghost we will praise,
In Jesus' Name through endless
days :

God Almighty, God Three in One,
God Almighty, God alone.

20 March 1863.

CONSIDER

CONSIDER

The lilies of the field whose bloom
is brief :

We are as they ;
Like them we fade away

As doth a leaf.

Consider

The sparrows of the air of small
account ;

Our God doth view

Whether they fall or mount,—
He guards us too.

Consider

The lilies that do neither spin nor toil,
Yet are most fair :—

What profits all this care

And all this coil ?

Consider

The birds that have no barn nor
harvest-weeks ;

God gives them food :—

Much more our Father seeks
To do us good.

7 May 1863.

THE LOWEST PLACE

GIVE me the lowest place ; not that
I dare

Ask for that lowest place, but
Thou hast died

That I might live and share
Thy glory by Thy side.

Give me the lowest place : or if for
me

That lowest place too high, make
one more low

Where I may sit and see

My God and love Thee so.

25 July 1863.

COME UNTO ME

OH for the time gone by when
thought of Christ

Made His yoke easy and His
burden light !

When my heart stirred within me
at the sight

Of altar spread for awful Eucharist :
When all my hopes His promises
sufficed :

When my soul watched for Him,
by day, by night :

When my lamp lightened and
my robe was white,

And all seemed loss except the
pearl unpriced.

Yet, since He calls me still with
tender call,

Since He remembers whom I
half forgot,

I even will run my race and bear
my lot :

For Faith the walls of Jericho cast
down,

And Hope to whoso runs holds
 forth a crown,
 And Love is Christ, and Christ is
 all in all.

23 February 1864.

WHO SHALL DELIVER ME?

GOD strengthen me to bear myself;
 That heaviest weight of all to bear,
 Inalienable weight of care.

All others are outside myself;
 I lock my door and bar them out,
 The turmoil, tedium, gad-about.

I lock my door upon myself,
 And bar them out; but who shall
 wall
 Self from myself, most loathed of
 all?

If I could once lay down myself,
 And start self-purged upon the race
 That all must run! Death runs
 apace.

If I could set aside myself,
 And start with lightened heart upon
 The road by all men overgone!

God harden me against myself,
 This coward with pathetic voice
 Who craves for ease, and rest, and
 joys:

Myself, arch-traitor to myself;
 My hollowest friend, my deadliest
 foe,
 My clog whatever road I go.

Yet One there is can curb myself,
 Can roll the strangling load from
 me,
 Break off the yoke and set me free.

1 March 1864.

IN PATIENCE

I WILL not faint, but trust in God
 Who this my lot hath given:
 He leads me by the thorny road
 Which is the road to heaven.
 Though sad my day that lasts so long,
 At evening I shall have a song:
 Though dim my day until the night,
 At evening-time there shall be light.

My life is but a working day
 Whose tasks are set aright:
 A while to work, a while to pray,
 And then a quiet night.
 And then, please God, a quiet night
 Where Saints and Angels walk in
 white:
 One dreamless sleep from work and
 sorrow,
 But re-awakening on the morrow.

19 March 1864.

NONE WITH HIM

MY God, to live: how didst Thou
 bear to live,
 Preaching and teaching, toiling
 to and fro?
 Few men accepting what Thou
 hadst to give,
 Few men prepared to know
 Thy Face, to see the truth Thou
 cam'st to show.

My God, to die: how didst Thou
 bear to die
 That long slow death in weariness
 of pain?
 A curse and an astonishment, past
 by,
 Pointed at, mocked again,
 By men for whom Thy blood was
 shed in vain.

Whilst I do hardly bear my easy
life,
And hardly face my easy-coming
death :

I turn to flee before the tug of
strife ;
And shrink with troubled breath
From sleep, that is not death,
Thy Spirit saith.

14 June 1864.

BY THE WATERS OF BABYLON

B.C. 570

HERE, where I dwell, I waste to
skin and bone ;

The curse is come upon me, and
I waste

In penal torment powerless to
atone.

The curse is come on me, which
makes no haste

And doth not tarry, crushing both
the proud

Hard man and him the sinner
double-faced.

Look not upon me, for my soul is
bowed

Within me, as my body in this
mire ;

My soul crawls dumb-struck, sore
bestead and cowed.

As Sodom and Gomorrah scourged
by fire,

As Jericho before God's trumpet-
peal,

So we the elect ones perish in
His ire.

Vainly we gird on sackcloth, vainly
kneel

With famished faces toward Jeru-
salem :

His heart is shut against us not
to feel,

His ears against our cry He shutteth
them,

His hand He shorteneth that He
will not save,

His law is loud against us to
condemn :

And we, as unclean bodies in the
grave

Inheriting corruption and the dark,
Are outcast from His presence

which we crave.

Our Mercy hath departed from His
Ark,

Our Glory hath departed from
His rest,

Our Shield hath left us naked as
a mark

Unto all pitiless eyes made manifest.

Our very Father hath forsaken us,

Our God hath cast us from Him :
we oppress'd

Unto our foes are even marvellous,

A hissing and a butt for pointing
hands,

Whilst God Almighty hunts and
grinds us thus ;

For He hath scattered us in alien
lands,

Our priests, our princes, our
anointed king,

And bound us hand and foot with
brazen hands.

Here while I sit my painful heart
takes wing

Home to the home-land I may see
no more,

Where milk and honey flow,
where waters spring

And fail not, where I dwelt in days
of yore

Under my fig-tree and my fruitful
vine,

<p>There where my parents dwelt at ease before :</p> <p>Now strangers press the olives that are mine, Reap all the corners of my harvest- field, And make their fat hearts wanton with my wine.</p> <p>To them my trees, to them my gardens yield Their sweets and spices and their tender green, O'er them in noontide heat out- spread their shield.</p> <p>Yet these are they whose fathers had not been Housed with my dogs, whom hip and thigh we smote And with their blood washed their pollutions clean, Purging the land which spewed them from its throat ; Their daughters took we for a pleasant prey, Choice tender ones on whom the fathers doat.</p> <p>Now they in turn have led our own away ; Our daughters and our sisters and our wives Sore weeping as they weep who curse the day, To live, remote from help, dis- honoured lives, Soothing their drunken masters with a song, Or dancing in their golden tinkling gyves :</p> <p>Accurst if they remember through the long Estrangement of their exile, twice accurst If they forget and join the ac- cursèd throng.</p>	<p>How doth my heart that is so wrung not burst When I remember that my way was plain, And that God's candle lit me at the first, Whilst now I grope in darkness, grobe in vain, Desiring but to find Him Who is lost, To find Him once again, but once again !</p> <p>His wrath came on us to the utter- most, His covenanted and most righteous wrath : Yet this is He of Whom we made our boast, Who lit the Fiery Pillar in our path, Who swept the Red Sea dry before our feet, Who in His jealousy smote kings, and hath Sworn once to David : One shall fill thy seat Born of thy body, as the sun and moon Stablished for aye in sovereignty complete.</p> <p>O Lord, remember David, and that soon. The Glory hath departed, Ichabod ! Yet now, before our sun grow dark at noon, Before we come to nought beneath Thy rod, Before we go down quick into the pit, Remember us for good, O God our God :— Thy Name will I remember, praising it, Though Thou forget me, though Thou hide Thy face,</p>
---	--

And blot me from the Book which
 Thou hast writ,
 Thy Name will I remember in my
 praise
 And call to mind Thy faithfulness
 of old,
 Though as a weaver Thou cut off
 my days
 And end me as a tale ends that
 is told.

29 June 1864.

DESPISED AND REJECTED

My sun has set, I dwell
 In darkness as a dead man out of
 sight ;
 And none remains, not one, that I
 should tell
 To him mine evil plight
 This bitter night.
 I will make fast my door
 That hollow friends may trouble me
 no more.

‘Friend, open to Me.’—‘Who is
 this that calls ?’

Nay, I am deaf as are my walls :
 Cease crying, for I will not hear
 Thy cry of hope or fear.
 Others were dear,
 Others forsook me : what art thou
 indeed

That I should heed
 Thy lamentable need ?
 Hungry should feed,
 Or stranger lodge thee here ?’

‘Friend, My Feet bleed.
 Open thy door to Me and comfort
 Me.’

‘I will not open, trouble me no more.
 Go on thy way footsore,
 I will not rise and open unto thee.’

R

‘Then is it nothing to thee ? Open,
 see

Who stands to plead with thee.
 Open, lest I should pass thee by,
 and thou

One day entreat my Face
 And howl for grace,
 And I be deaf as thou art now.
 Open to Me.’

Then I cried out upon him : ‘Cease,
 Leave me in peace :

Fear not that I should crave
 Aught thou mayst have.

Leave me in peace, yea trouble me
 no more,

Lest I arise and chase thee from my
 door.

What, shall I not be let
 Alone, that thou dost vex me yet ?’

But all night long that voice spake
 urgently,

‘Open to Me.’

Still harping in mine ears :

‘Rise, let Me in.’

Pleading with tears :

‘Open to Me, that I may come to
 thee.’

While the dew dropped, while the
 dark hours were cold :

‘My Feet bleed, see My Face,
 See My Hands bleed that bring thee
 grace,

My Heart doth bleed for thee,—
 Open to Me.’

So till the break of day :

Then died away

That voice, in silence as of sorrow ;

Then footsteps echoing like a sigh

Passed me by,

Lingering footsteps slow to pass.

R

On the morrow
I saw upon the grass
Each footprint marked in blood, and
on my door
The mark of blood for evermore.

10 October 1864.

WEARY IN WELL-DOING

I WOULD have gone ; God bade me
stay :

I would have worked ; God bade
me rest.

He broke my will from day to day ;
He read my yearnings unexpressed,
And said them nay.

Now I would stay ; God bids me go :
Now I would rest ; God bids me
work.

He breaks my heart tost to and fro ;
My soul is wrung with doubts that
lurk
And vex it so.

I go, Lord, where Thou sendest
me ;

Day after day I plod and moil :
But, Christ my God, when will it be
That I may let alone my toil
And rest with Thee ?

22 October 1864.

BIRDS OF PARADISE

GOLDEN-WINGED, silver-winged,
Winged with flashing flame,
Such a flight of birds I saw,
Birds without a name :
Singing songs in their own tongue—
Song of songs—they came.

One to another calling,
Each answering each,
One to another calling
In their proper speech :
High above my head they wheeled,
Far out of reach.

On wings of flame they went and
came

With a cadenced clang :
Their silver wings tinkled,
Their golden wings rang ;
The wind it whistled through their
wings
Where in heaven they sang.

They flashed and they darted
Awhile before mine eyes,
Mounting, mounting, mounting still,
In haste to scale the skies,
Birds without a nest on earth,
Birds of Paradise.

Where the moon riseth not
Nor sun seeks the west,
There to sing their glory
Which they sing at rest,
There to sing their love-song
When they sing their best :—

Not in any garden
That mortal foot hath trod,
Not in any flowering tree
That springs from earthly sod,
But in the garden where they dwell,
The Paradise of God.

14 November 1864.

DOST THOU NOT CARE?

'I LOVE and love not: Lord, it breaks
my heart
To love and not to love.
Thou veiled within Thy glory, gone
apart
Into Thy shrine which is above,

Dost Thou not love me, Lord, or care
For this mine ill?'—

'I love thee here or there,
I will accept thy broken heart—
lie still.'

'Lord, it was well with me in time
gone by
That cometh not again,
When I was fresh and cheerful, who
but I?

I fresh, I cheerful: worn with pain
Now, out of sight and out of heart;
O Lord, how long?'—

'I watch thee as thou art,
I will accept thy fainting heart—
be strong.'

'Lie still, be strong, to-day: but,
Lord, to-morrow,
What of to-morrow, Lord?
Shall there be rest from toil, be truce
from sorrow,

Be living green upon the sward,
Now but a barren grave to me,
Be joy for sorrow?'—

'Did I not die for thee?
Do I not live for thee? Leave
Me to-morrow.'

24 December 1864.

I KNOW YOU NOT

O CHRIST, the Vine with living fruit,
The twelvefold-fruited Tree of Life,
The Balm in Gilead after strife,
The Valley-lily and the Rose;
Stronger than Lebanon Thou Root;
Sweeter than clustered grapes Thou
Vine;

O best, Thou Vineyard of red wine,
Keeping Thy best wine till the
close.

Pearl of great price Thyself alone,
And ruddier than the ruby Thou;
Most precious lightening Jasper
stone,

Head of the corner spurned before:
Fair gate of pearl, Thyself the Door;
Clear golden street, Thyself the Way;
By Thee we journey toward Thee
now,

Through Thee shall enter heaven one
day.

I thirst for Thee, full fount and flood;
My heart calls thine, as deep to
deep:

Dost Thou forget Thy sweat
and pain,

Thy provocation on the cross?
Heart-pierced for me, vouchsafe to
keep

The purchase of Thy lavished Blood:
The gain is Thine, Lord, if I gain;
Or, if I lose, Thine own the
loss.

At midnight, saith the Parable,
A cry was made, the Bridegroom
came;

Those who were ready entered
in:

The rest, shut out in death and
shame,

Strove all too late that feast to
win,

Their die was cast and fixed their
lot;

A gulf divided heaven from hell;
The Bridegroom said—I know you
not.

But Who is this that shuts the door,
And saith—I know you not—to
them?

I see the wounded hands and
side,

The brow thorn-tortured long
ago :
Yea, This who grieved and bled
and died,
This same is He who must con-
demn ;
He called, but they refused
to know ;
So now He hears their cry no more.
Circa 1864.

IF ONLY

IF only I might love my God and
die !—
But now He bids me love Him and
live on,
Now when the bloom of all my
life is gone,
The pleasant half of life has quite
gone by.
My tree of hope is lopt that spread
so high;
And I forget how summer glowed
and shone,
While autumn grips me with its
fingers wan,
And frets me with its fitful windy
sigh.
When autumn passes then must
winter numb,
And winter may not pass a weary
while.
But when it passes spring shall
flower again :
And in that spring who weepeth
now shall smile—
Yea, they shall wax who now
are on the wane,
Yea, they shall sing for love when
Christ shall come.
20 February 1865.

LONG BARREN

THOU who didst hang upon a barren
tree,
My God, for me ;
Though I till now be barren, now
at length,
Lord, give me strength
To bring forth fruit to Thee.

Thou who didst bear for me the
crown of thorn,
Spitting and scorn ;
Though I till now have put forth
thorns, yet now
Strengthen me Thou
That better fruit be borne.

Thou Rose of Sharon, Cedar of
broad roots,
Vine of sweet fruits,
Thou Lily of the vale with fade-
less leaf,
Of thousands Chief,
Feed Thou my feeble shoots.
21 February 1865.

YOUNG DEATH

LYING a-dying—
Such sweet things untasted,
Such rare beauties wasted :
Her hair a hidden treasure,
Her voice a lost pleasure :
Her soul made void of passion,
Her body going to nothing
Though long it took to fashion,
Soon to be a loathing.
Her road hath no turning,
Her light is burning burning
With last feeble flashes,
Dying from the birth :

Dust to dust, earth to earth,
Ashes to ashes.

Lo in the room, the upper,
She shall sit down to supper,
New-bathed from head to feet
And on Christ gazing :
Her mouth kept clean and sweet
Shall laugh and sing, God praising.
Then shall be no more weeping
Or fear or sorrow,
Or waking more or sleeping
Or night or morrow,
Or cadence in the song
Of saints, or thirst or hunger :
The strong shall rise more strong,
And the young younger.

3 November 1865.

MOTHER COUNTRY

OH what is that country
And where can it be,
Not mine own country,
But dearer far to me ?
Yet mine own country,
If I one day may see
Its spices and cedars,
Its gold and ivory.

As I lie dreaming,
It rises, that land ;
There rises before me
Its green golden strand,
With the bowing cedars
And the shining sand ;
It sparkles and flashes
Like a shaken brand.

Do angels lean nearer
While I lie and long ?
I see their soft plumage
And catch their windy song,

Like the rise of a high tide
Sweeping full and strong ;
I mark the outskirts
Of their reverend throng.

Oh what is a king here,
Or what is a boor ?
Here all starve together,
All dwarfed and poor ;
Here Death's hand knocketh
At door after door,
He thins the danciers
From the festal floor.

Oh what is a handmaid,
Or what is a queen ?
All must lie down together
Where the turf is green,
The foulest face hidden,
The fairest not seen ;
Gone as if never
They had breathed or been.

Gone from sweet sunshine
Underneath the sod,
Turned from warm flesh and blood
To senseless clod,
Gone as if never
They had toiled or trod,
Gone out of sight of all
Except our God.

Shut into silence
From the accustomed song,
Shut into solitude
From all earth's throng,
Run down though swift of foot,
Thrust down though strong :
Life made an end of,
Seemed it short or long.

Life made an end of,—
Life but just begun ;
Life finished yesterday,
Its last sand run :

Life new-born with the morrow,
 Fresh as the sun :
 While done is done for ever ;
 Undone, undone.

And if that life is life,
 This is but a breath,
 The passage of a dream
 And the shadow of death ;
 But a vain shadow
 If one considereth ;
 Vanity of vanities,
 As the Preacher saith.

7 February 1866.

AFTER COMMUNION

WHY should I call Thee Lord, Who
 art my God ?

Why should I call Thee Friend,
 Who art my Love ?

Or King, Who art my very Spouse
 above ?

Or call Thy Sceptre on my heart
 Thy rod ?

Lo now Thy banner over me is love,
 All heaven flies open to me at Thy
 nod :

For Thou hast lit Thy flame in me
 a clod,

Made me a nest for dwelling of
 Thy Dove.

What wilt Thou call me in our
 home above,

Who now hast called me friend ?
 how will it be

When Thou for good wine
 settest forth the best ?

Now Thou dost bid me come and
 sup with Thee,

Now Thou dost make me lean
 upon Thy breast :

How will it be with me in time of
 love ?

23 February 1866.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

IN the bleak mid-winter
 Frosty wind made moan,
 Earth stood hard as iron,
 Water like a stone ;
 Snow had fallen, snow on snow,
 Snow on snow,
 In the bleak mid-winter
 Long ago.

Our God, Heaven cannot hold
 Him

Nor earth sustain ;
 Heaven and earth shall flee away
 When He comes to reign :

In the bleak mid-winter
 A stable-place sufficed
 The Lord God Almighty
 Jesus Christ.

Enough for Him, whom cherubim
 Worship night and day,
 A breastful of milk
 And a mangerful of hay ;
 Enough for Him, whom angels
 Fall down before,
 The ox and ass and camel
 Which adore.

Angels and archangels
 May have gathered there,
 Cherubim and seraphim
 Thronged the air ;
 But only His mother
 In her maiden bliss
 Worshipped the Beloved
 With a kiss.

What can I give Him.

Poor as I am ?

If I were a shepherd

I would bring a lamb,

If I were a Wise Man
 I would do my part,—
 Yet what I can I give Him,
 Give my heart.

Before 1872.

WRESTLING

ALAS my Lord,
 How should I wrestle all the live-
 long night
 With Thee my God, my strength
 and my delight?

How can it need
 So agonized an effort and a strain
 To make Thy face of mercy shine
 again?

How can it need
 Such wringing out of breathless
 prayer to move
 Thee to Thy wonted love, when
 Thou art Love?

Yet Abraham
 So hung about Thine arm, out-
 stretcht and bared,
 That for ten righteous Sodom had
 been spared.

Yet Jacob did
 So hold Thee by the clenched hand
 of prayer
 That he prevailed and Thou didst
 bless him there.

Elias prayed,
 And sealed the founts of heaven :
 he prayed again,
 And lo Thy blessing fell in showers
 of rain.

Gulpt by the fish
 And by the pit, lost Jonah made
 his moan,
 And Thou forgavest, waiting to
 atone.

All Nineveh
 Fasting and girt in sackcloth raised
 a cry,
 Which moved Thee ere the day of
 grace went by.

Thy Church prayed on
 And on for blessed Peter in his
 strait,
 Till opened of its own accord the
 gate.

Yea Thou my God
 Hast prayed all night, and in the
 garden prayed,
 Even while like melting wax Thy
 strength was made.

Alas for him
 Who faints despite Thy pattern,
 King of Saints !
 Alas alas for me the one that
 faints !

Lord, give us strength
 To hold Thee fast until we hear
 Thy voice,
 Which Thine own know who hearing
 it rejoice.

Lord, give us strength
 To hold Thee fast until we see Thy
 Face,
 Full fountain of all rapture and all
 grace.

But, when our strength
Shall be made darkness, and our
bodies clay,
Hold Thou us fast and give us sleep
till day.

Before 1875.

THE MASTER IS COME, AND CALLETH FOR THEE

Who calleth?—Thy Father calleth,
Run, O Daughter, to wait on
Him :

He Who chasteneth but for a season
Trims thy lamp that it burn not
dim.

Who calleth?—Thy Master calleth,
Sit, Disciple, and learn of Him :
He Who teacheth wisdom of Angels
Makes thee wise as the Cherubim.

Who calleth?—Thy Monarch calleth,
Rise, O Subject, and follow Him :
He is stronger than Death or Devil,
Fear not thou if the foe be grim.

Who calleth?—Thy Lord God
calleth,
Fall, O Creature, adoring Him :
He is jealous, thy God Almighty,
Count not dear to thee life or
limb.

Who calleth?—Thy Bridegroom
calleth,
Soar, O Bride, with the Seraphim :
He Who loves thee as no man loveth
Bids thee give up thy heart to
Him.

Before 1876.

'WHEN MY HEART IS VEXED I WILL COMPLAIN'

'O LORD, how canst Thou say
Thou lovest me—
Me whom thou settest in a barren
land,
Hungry and thirsty on the burn-
ing sand,
Hungry and thirsty where no waters
be
Nor shadows of date-bearing tree :—
O Lord, how canst Thou say Thou
lovest me ?'

'I came from Edom by as parched
a track,
As rough a track beneath My
bleeding feet.
I came from Edom seeking thee,
and sweet
I counted bitterness ; I turned not
back
But counted life as death, and trod
The winepress all alone : and I am
God.'

'Yet, Lord, how canst Thou say
Thou lovest me ?
For Thou art strong to comfort :
and could I
But comfort one I love who, like
to die,
Lifts feeble hands and eyes that fail
to see
In one last prayer for comfort—
nay,
I could not stand aside or turn away.'

'Alas thou knowest that for thee I
died,
For thee I thirsted with the dying
thirst ;

I, blessèd, for thy sake was counted
 curst,
 In sight of men and angels crucified:
 All this and more I bore to
 prove
 My love, and wilt thou yet mistrust
 My love?’

‘Lord, I am fain to think Thou
 lovest me,
 For Thou art all in all and I am
 Thine; *
 And lo Thy love is better than
 new wine,
 And I am sick of love in loving
 Thee.
 But dost Thou love me? Speak
 and save,
 For jealousy is cruel as the grave.’

‘Nay, if thy love is not an empty
 breath,
 My love is as thine own—deep
 answers deep.
 Peace, peace: I give to My be-
 loved sleep—
 Not death but sleep, for love is
 strong as death.
 Take patience: sweet thy sleep
 shall be:
 Yea thou shalt wake in Paradise
 with Me.’

Before 1876.

SAINTS AND ANGELS

It's oh in Paradise that I fain would
 be,
 Away from earth and weariness
 and all beside:
 Earth is too full of loss with its
 dividing sea,
 But Paradise upbuilds the bower
 for the bride.

Where flowers are yet in bud while
 the boughs are green,
 I would get quit of earth and get
 robed for heaven;
 Putting on my raiment white within
 the screen,
 Putting on my crown of gold
 whose gems are seven.

Fair is the fourfold river that maketh
 no moan,
 Fair are the trees fruit-bearing
 of the wood,
 Fair are the gold and bdellium and
 the onyx stone,
 And I know the gold of that
 land is good.

O my love, my dove, lift up your
 eyes
 Toward the eastern gate like an
 opening rose;
 You and I who parted will meet in
 Paradise,
 Pass within and sing when the
 gates unclose.

This life is but the passage of a
 day,
 This life is but a pang and all is
 over,
 But in the life to come which fades
 not away
 Every love shall abide and every
 lover.

He who wore out pleasure and
 mastered all lore,
 Solomon wrote ‘Vanity of
 vanities’:
 Down to death, of all that went
 before
 In his mighty long life, the record
 is this.

With loves by the hundred, wealth
beyond measure,
Is this he who wrote 'Vanity of
vanities' ?
Yea, 'Vanity of vanities' he saith
of pleasure,
And of all he learned set his seal
to this.

Yet we love and faint not, for our
love is one,
And we hope and flag not, for
our hope is sure ;
Although there be nothing new
beneath the sun,
And no help for life and for death
no cure.

The road to death is life, the gate
of life is death,
We who wake shall sleep, we
shall wax who wane ;
Let us not vex our souls for stoppage
of a breath,
The fall of a river that turneth
not again.

Be the road short, and be the gate
near,—
Shall a short road tire, a strait
gate appall ?
The loves that meet in Paradise
shall cast out fear,
And Paradise hath room for you
and me and all.

Before 1876.

A ROSE PLANT IN JERICO

AT morn I plucked a rose and gave
it Thee,
A rose of joy and happy love and
peace,

A rose with scarce a thorn :
But in the chillness of a second
morn
My rose bush drooped, and all
its gay increase
Was but one thorn that wounded
me.

I plucked the thorn and offered it
to Thee,
And for my thorn Thou gavest
love and peace,
Not joy this mortal morn :
If Thou hast given much
treasure for a thorn,
Wilt Thou not give me for my
rose increase
Of gladness, and all sweets to me ?

My thorny rose, my love and pain,
to Thee
I offer ; and I set my heart in
peace,
And rest upon my thorn :
For verily I think to-morrow
morn
Shall bring me Paradise, my
gift's increase,
Yea, give Thy very Self to me.

Before 1876.

PATIENCE OF HOPE

THE flowers that bloom in sun and
shade,
And glitter in the dew—
The flowers must fade.
The birds that build their nest and
sing
When lovely Spring is new
Must soon take wing.

The sun that rises in his strength,
To wake and warm the world,
Must set at length.

The sea that overflows the shore
With billows frothed and curled
Must ebb once more.

All come and go, all wax and wane,
O Lord, save only Thou,
Who dost remain

The same to all eternity.
All things which fail us now
We trust to Thee.

Circa 1880.

I WILL ARISE

WEARY and weak,—accept my weariness ;

Weary and weak and downcast in
my soul,

With hope growing less and less,
And with the goal

Distant and dim,—accept my sore
distress.

I thought to reach the goal so long
ago,

At outset of the race I dreamed
of rest,

Not knowing what now I know
Of breathless haste,
Of long-drawn straining effort
across the waste.

One only thing I knew, Thy love of
me ;

One only thing I know, Thy sacred
same

Love of me full and free,
A craving flame

Of selfless love of me which burns
in Thee.

How can I think of Thee, and yet
grow chill ?

Of Thee, and yet grow cold and
nigh to death ?

Re-energize my will,

Rebuild my faith ;

I will arise and run, Thou giving
me breath.

I will arise, repenting and in pain ;
I will arise, and smite upon my
breast

And turn to Thee again ;

Thou choosest best ;

Lead me along the road Thou makest
plain.

Lead me a little way, and carry me

A little way, and hearken to my
sighs,

And store my tears with Thee,

And deign replies

To feeble prayers ;—O Lord, I
will arise.

Before 1882.

A PRODIGAL SON

DOES that lamp still burn in my
Father's house

Which he kindled the night I went
away ?

I turned once beneath the cedar
boughs,

And marked it gleam with a
golden ray ;

Did he think to light me home
some day ?

Hungry here with the crunching
swine,

Hungry harvest have I to reap ;

In a dream I count my Father's kine,
I hear the tinkling bells of his

sheep,

I watch his lambs that browse and
leap.

There is plenty of bread at home,
 His servants have bread enough
 and to spare ;
 The purple wine-fat froths with foam,
 Oil and spices make sweet the
 air,
 While I perish hungry and bare.

Rich and blessed those servants,
 rather
 Than I who see not my Father's
 face !

I will arise and go to my Father :—
 'Fallen from sonship, beggared
 of grace,
 Grant me, Father, a servant's
 place.'

Before 1882.

FOR THINE OWN SAKE, O MY GOD

WEARIED of sinning, wearied of
 repentance,
 Wearied of self, I turn, my God,
 to Thee ;

To Thee, my Judge, on Whose all-
 righteous sentence
 Hangs mine eternity :

I turn to Thee, I plead Thyself with
 Thee,—
 Be pitiful to me.

Wearied I loathe myself, I loathe my
 sinning,
 My stains, my festering sores, my
 misery :

Thou the Beginning, Thou ere my
 beginning

Didst see and didst foresee

Me miserable, me sinful, ruined
 me,—

I plead Thyself with Thee.

I plead Thyself with Thee Who art
 my maker,
 Regard Thy handiwork that cries
 to Thee ;

I plead Thyself with Thee Who wast
 partaker

Of mine infirmity ;

Love made Thee what Thou art, the
 love of me,—

I plead Thyself with Thee.

Before 1882.

UNTIL THE DAY BREAK

WHEN will the day bring its plea-
 sure ?

When will the night bring its rest ?
 Reaper and gleaner and thresher
 Peer toward the east and the
 west :—

The Sower He knoweth, and He
 knoweth best.

Meteors flash forth and expire,
 Northern lights kindle and pale ;
 These are the days of desire,
 Of eyes looking upward that fail ;
 Vanishing days as a finishing tale.

Bows down the crop in its glory,
 Tenfold, fiftyfold, hundredfold ;
 The millet is ripened and hoary,
 The wheat ears are ripened to
 gold :—

Why keep us waiting in dimness
 and cold ?

The Lord of the harvest, He knoweth
 Who knoweth the first and the last:
 The Sower Who patiently soweth,
 He scanneth the present and past :
 He saith, 'What thou hast, what
 remaineth, hold fast.'

Yet, Lord, o'er Thy toil-wearied
weepers

The storm-clouds hang muttering
and frown :

On threshers and gleaners and
reapers,

O Lord of the harvest, look down ;
Oh for the harvest, the shout,
and the crown !

'Not so,' saith the Lord of the
reapers,

The Lord of the first and the last :

'O My toilers, My weary, My weepers,
What ye have, what remaineth,
hold fast.

Hide in My heart till the ven-
geance be past.'

Before 1882.

'OF HIM THAT WAS READY
TO PERISH'

LORD, I am waiting, weeping, watch-
ing for Thee :

My youth and hope lie by me
buried and dead,

My wandering love hath not where
to lay its head

Except Thou say 'Come to Me.'

My noon is ended, abolished from
life and light,

My noon is ended, ended and done
away,

My sun went down in the hours
that still were day,

And my lingering day is night.

How long, O Lord, how long in my
desperate pain

Shall I weep and watch, shall I
weep and long for Thee ?

Is Thy grace ended, Thy love cut
off from me ?

How long shall I long in vain ?

O God Who before the beginning
hast seen the end,

Who hast made me flesh and
blood, not frost and not fire,

Who hast filled me full of needs
and love and desire

And a heart that craves a
friend,—

Who hast said 'Come to Me and I
will give thee rest,'

Who hast said 'Take on thee My
yoke and learn of Me,'

Who calledst a little child to come
to Thee,

And pillowedst John on Thy
breast ;

Who spak'st to women that followed
Thee sorrowing,

Bidding them weep for themselves
and weep for their own ;

Who didst welcome the outlaw
adoring Thee all alone,

And plight Thy word as a
King,—

By Thy love of these and of all that
ever shall be,

By Thy love of these and of all
the born and unborn,

Turn Thy gracious eyes on me
and think no scorn

Of me, not even of me.

Beside Thy Cross I hang on my
cross in shame,

My wounds, weakness, extremity
cry to Thee :

Bid me also to Paradise, also me,
For the glory of Thy Name.

Before 1882.

BEHOLD THE MAN

SHALL Christ hang on the Cross,
and we not look ?

Heaven, earth, and hell, stood
gazing at the first,

While Christ for long-cursed man
was counted cursed ;

Christ, God and Man, Whom God
the Father strook

And shamed and sifted and one
while forsook :—

Cry shame upon our bodies we
have nursed

In sweets, our souls in pride, our
spirits immersed

In wilfulness, our steps run all acrook.
Cry shame upon us ! for He bore our

shame

In agony, and we look on at ease
With neither hearts on flame nor
cheeks on flame.

What hast thou, what have I, to
do with peace ?

Not to send peace but send a sword
He came,

And fire and fasts and tearful
night watches.

Before 1882.

THE DESCENT FROM THE
CROSS

Is this the Face that thrills with awe
Seraphs who veil their face above ?

Is this the Face without a flaw,
The Face that is the Face of Love ?

Yea, this defaced, a lifeless clod,
Hath all creation's love sufficed,

Hath satisfied the love of God,
This Face the Face of Jesus

Christ.

Before 1882.

IT IS FINISHED

DEAR Lord, let me recount to Thee
Some of the great things Thou hast
done

For me, even me

Thy little one.

It was not I that cared for Thee,—
But Thou didst set Thy heart upon

Me, even me

Thy little one.

And therefore was it sweet to Thee
To leave Thy Majesty and Throne,

And grow like me

A Little One,

A swaddled Baby on the knee
Of a dear Mother of Thine own,
Quite weak like me

Thy little one.

Thou didst assume my misery,
And reap the harvest I had sown,

Comforting me

Thy little one.

Jerusalem and Galilee,—

Thy love embraced not those alone,
But also me

Thy little one.

Thy unblemished Body on the
Tree

Was bared and broken to atone
For me, for me

Thy little one.

Thou lovedst me upon the Tree,—
Still me, hid by the ponderous

stone,—

Me always—me

Thy little one.

And love of me arose with Thee
When death and hell lay overthrown :
Thou lovedst me
Thy little one.

And love of me went up with Thee
To sit upon Thy Father's Throne :
Thou lovest me
Thy little one.

Lord, as Thou me, so would I Thee
Love in pure love's communion,
For Thou lov'st me
Thy little one :

Which love of me bring back with
Thee
To Judgment when the Trump is
blown,
Still loving me
Thy little one.

Before 1882.

AN EASTER CAROL

SPRING bursts to-day,
For Christ is risen and all the earth's
at play.

Flash forth, thou Sun,
The rain is over and gone, its work
is done.

Winter is past,
Sweet Spring is come at last, is come
at last.

Bud, Fig and Vine,
Bud, Olive, fat with fruit and oil and
wine.

Break forth this morn
In roses, thou but yesterday a thorn.

Uplift thy head,
O pure white Lily through the
Winter dead.

Beside your dams
Leap and rejoice, you merry-making
Lambs.

All Herds and Flocks
Rejoice, all Beasts of thickets and
of rocks.

Sing, Creatures, sing,
Angels and Men and Birds and
everything.

All notes of Doves
Fill all our world : this is the time
of loves.

Before 1882.

'BEHOLD A SHAKING'

I

MAN rising to the doom that shall
not err,—

Which hath most dread—the
arouse of all or each ?

All kindreds of all nations of all
speech,

Or one by one of *him* and *him* and
her ?

While dust reanimate begins to stir
Here, there, beyond, beyond,
reach beyond reach ;

While every wave refashions on
the beach

Alive or dead-in-life some seafarer.

Now meeting doth not join or
parting part ;

True meeting and true parting
wait till then,

When whoso meet are joined
for evermore,

Face answering face and heart at
rest in heart :—
God bring us all rejoicing to
the shore
Of happy Heaven, His sheep
home to the pen.

2

Blessed that flock safe penned in
Paradise ;
Blessed this flock which tramps
in weary ways.
All form one flock, God's flock ;
all yield Him praise
By joy or pain, still tending toward
the prize.
Joy speaks in praises there, and
sings and flies
Where no night is, exulting all
its days ;
Here, pain finds solace, for
behold it prays ;
In both love lives the life that never
dies.
Here life is the beginning of our death,
And death the starting-point
whence life ensues ;
Surely our life is death, our
death is life :
Nor need we lay to heart our
peace or strife,
But calm in faith and patience
breathe the breath
God gave, to take again when He
shall choose.

Before 1882.

ALL SAINTS

THEY are flocking from the East
And the West,
They are flocking from the North
And the South,

Every moment setting forth
From realm of snake or lion,
Swamp or sand,
Ice or burning.
Greatest and least,
Palm in hand
And praise in mouth,
They are flocking up the path
To their rest,
Up the path that hath
No returning.
Up the steeps of Zion
They are mounting,
Coming, coming,
Throngs beyond man's counting ;
With a sound
Like innumerable bees
Swarming, humming,
Where flowering trees
Many-tinted,
Many-scented,
All alike abound
With honey,—
With a swell
Like a blast upswaying unrestrain-
able
From a shadowed dell
To the hill-tops sunny,—
With a thunder
Like the ocean when in strength
Breadth and length
It sets to shore.
More and more
Waves on waves redoubled pour
Leaping flashing to the shore ;
Unlike the under
Drain of ebb that loseth ground
For all its roar.

They are thronging
From the East and West,
From the North and South ;
Saints are thronging, loving, long-
ing,

To their land
Of rest,
Palm in hand
And praise in mouth.

Before 1882.

‘TAKE CARE OF HIM’

‘THOU whom I love, for whom I
died,
Lovest thou Me, My bride?’—
Low on my knees I love Thee,
Lord,
Believed in and adored.

‘That I love thee the proof is
plain :
How dost thou love again?’—
In prayer, in toil, in earthly loss,
In a long-carried cross.

‘Yea, thou dost love : yet one adept
Brings more for Me to accept.’—
I mould my will to match with
Thine,
My wishes I resign.

‘Thou givest much : then give the
whole
For solace of My soul.’—
More would I give, if I could get :
But, Lord, what lack I yet?

‘In Me thou lovest Me : I call
Thee to love Me in all.’—
Brim full my heart, dear Lord, that so
My love may overflow.

‘Love me in sinners and in saints,
In each who needs or faints.’—
Lord, I will love Thee as I can
In every brother man.

‘All sore, all crippled, all who ache,
Tend all for My dear sake.’—
All for Thy sake, Lord : I will see
In every sufferer Thee.

‘So I at last, upon My Throne
Of glory, Judge alone,
So I at last will say to thee :
Thou diddest it to Me.’

Before 1882.

A MARTYR

THE VIGIL OF THE FEAST

INNER not outer, without gnash of
teeth

Or weeping, save quiet sobs of
some who pray

And feel the Everlasting Arms
beneath,—

Blackness of darkness this, but not
for aye ;

Darkness that even in gathering
fleeteth fast,

Blackness of blackest darkness
close to day.

Lord Jesus, through Thy darkened
pillar cast

Thy gracious eyes all-seeing cast
on me

Until this tyranny be overpast.

Me, Lord, remember who remember
Thee,

And cleave to Thee, and see Thee
without sight,

And choose Thee still in dire
extremity,

And in this darkness worship Thee
my Light,

And Thee my Life adore in shadow
of death,

Thee loved by day, and still be-
loved by night.

It is the Voice of my Beloved that
saith :

‘ I am the Way, the Truth, the
Life, I go

Whither that soul knows well that
followeth.’

O Lord, I follow, little as I know ;
At this eleventh hour I rise and
take

My life into my hand, and follow
so,

With tears and heart-misgivings and
heart-ache ;

Thy feeblest follower, yet Thy
follower

Indomitable for Thine only sake.

To-night I gird my will afresh, and
stir

My strength, and brace my heart
to do and dare,—

Marvelling : Will to-morrow wake
the whirr

Of the great rending wheel, or from
his lair

Startle the jubilant lion in his
rage,

Or clench the headsman’s hand
within my hair,

Or kindle fire to speed my pilgrimage,
Chariot of fire and horses of sheer
fire

Whirling me home to heaven by
one fierce stage?—

Thy Will I will, I Thy desire desire ;
Let not the waters close above
my head,

Uphold me that I sink not in this
mire :

For flesh and blood are frail and
sore afraid ;

And young I am, unsatisfied and
young,

With memories, hopes, with crav-
ings all unfed,

My song half sung, its sweetest notes
unsung,

All plans cut short, all possibilities,
Because my cord of life is soon
unstrung.

Was I a careless woman set at
ease

That this so bitter cup is brimmed
for me ?

Had mine own vintage settled on
the lees ?

A word, a puff of smoke, would set
me free ;

A word, a puff of smoke, over
and gone : . . .

Howbeit, whom have I, Lord, in
heaven but Thee ?

Yea, only Thee my choice is fixed
upon

In heaven or earth, eternity or
time :—

Lord, hold me fast, Lord, leave
me not alone,

Thy silly heartless dove that sees
the lime

Yet almost flutters to the tempting
bough :

Cover me, hide me, pluck me from
this crime.

A word, a puff of smoke, would save
me now : . . .

But who, my God, would save me
in the day

Of Thy fierce anger? only Saviour
Thou.

Preoccupy my heart, and turn away
And cover up mine eyes from
frantic fear,

And stop mine ears lest I be
driven astray :

For one stands ever dinning in mine
ear

How my grey Father withers in
the blight

Of love for me, who cruel am and
 dear ;
 And how my Mother through this
 lingering night
 Until the day sits tearless in her
 woe,
 Loathing for love of me the happy
 light
 Which brings to pass a concourse
 and a show
 To glut the hungry faces merci-
 less,
 The thousand faces swaying to
 and fro,
 Feasting on me unveiled in helples-
 ness,
 Alone,—yet not alone : Lord,
 stand by me
 As once by lonely Paul in his
 distress.
 As blossoms to the sun I turn to
 Thee ;
 Thy dove turns to her window,
 think no scorn ;
 As one dove to an ark on shore-
 less sea,
 To Thee I turn mine eyes, my heart
 forlorn.
 Put forth Thy scarred right Hand,
 kind Lord, take hold
 Of me Thine all-forsaken dove
 who mourn :
 For Thou hast loved me since the
 days of old,
 And I love Thee Whom loving I
 will love
 Through life's short fever-fits of
 heat and cold ;
 Thy Name will I extol and sing
 thereof,
 Will flee for refuge to Thy Blessed
 Name.
 Lord, look upon me from Thy
 bliss above :

Look down on me, who shrink from
 all the shame
 And pangs and desolation of my
 death,
 Wrenched piecemeal or devoured
 or set on flame,
 While all the world around me holds
 its breath
 With eyes glued on me for a
 gazing-stock,
 Pitiless eyes, while no man pitieth.
 The floods are risen, I stagger in
 their shock,
 My heart reels and is faint, I fail,
 I faint :
 My God, set Thou me up upon
 the rock,
 Thou Who didst long ago Thyself
 acquaint
 With death, our death ; Thou Who
 didst long ago
 Pour forth Thy soul for sinner
 and for saint.
 Bear me in mind, whom no one else
 will know ;
 Thou Whom Thy friends forsook,
 take Thou my part,
 Of all forsaken in mine overthrow ;
 Carry me in Thy bosom, in Thy
 heart,
 Carry me out of darkness into light,
 To-morrow make me see Thee as
 Thou art.
 Lover and friend Thou hidest from
 my sight.
 Alas, alas, mine earthly love, alas,
 For whom I thought to don the
 garments white
 And white wreath of a bride, this
 rugged pass
 Hath utterly divorced me from
 thy care.
 Yea, I am to thee as a shattered
 glass

Worthless, with no more beauty
 lodging there,
 Abhorred, lest I involve thee in
 my doom :
 For sweet are sunshine and this
 upper air,
 And life and youth are sweet, and
 give us room
 For all most sweetest sweetnesses
 we taste :
 Dear, what hast thou in common
 with a tomb ?
 I bow my head in silence, I make
 haste
 Alone, I make haste out into the
 dark,
 My life and youth and hope all
 run to waste.
 Is this my body cold and stiff and
 stark,
 Ashes made ashes, earth becoming
 earth,
 Is this a prize for man to make
 his mark ?
 Am I that very I who laughed in
 mirth
 A while ago, a little little while,
 Yet all the while a-dying since
 my birth ?
 Now am I tired, too tired to strive
 or smile ;
 I sit alone, my mouth is in the dust :
 Look Thou upon me, Lord, for I
 am vile.
 In Thee is all my hope, is all my
 trust,
 On Thee I centre all my self that
 dies,
 And self that dies not with its
 mortal crust,
 But sleeps and wakes, and in the
 end will rise
 With hymns and hallelujahs on
 its lips,

Thee loving with the love that
 satisfies.
 As once in Thine unutterable eclipse
 The sun and moon grew dark for
 sympathy,
 And earth cowered quaking under-
 neath the drips
 Of Thy slow Blood priceless exceed-
 ingly,
 So now a little spare me, and
 show forth
 Some pity, O my God, some pity
 of me.
 If trouble comes not from the south
 or north,
 But meted to us by Thy tender
 hand,
 Let me not in Thine eyes be
 nothing worth :
 Behold me where in agony I stand,
 Behold me no man caring for my
 soul,
 And take me to Thee in the far-
 off land,
 Shorten the race and lift me to the
 goal.

Before 1882.

WHY ?

' LORD, if I love Thee and Thou
 lovest me,
 Why need I any more these toil-
 some days ?
 Why should I not run singing up
 Thy ways
 Straight into heaven, to rest myself
 with Thee ?
 What need remains of death-pang
 yet to be,
 If all my soul is quickened in Thy
 praise ?
 If all my heart loves Thee, what
 need the amaze,

Struggle and dimness of an
agony?'—

'Bride whom I love, if thou too
lovest Me,

Thou needs must choose My Like-
ness for thy dower :

Sowilt thou toil in patience, and
abide

Hungering and thirsting for that
blessed hour

When I My Likeness shall behold in
thee,

And thou therein shalt waken
satisfied.'

Before 1882.

LOVE IS STRONG AS DEATH

I HAVE not sought Thee, I have
not found Thee,

I have not thirsted for Thee :

And now cold billows of death sur-
round me,

Buffeting billows of death astound
me,—

Wilt Thou look upon, wilt Thou
see

Thy perishing me ?'

'Yea, I have sought thee, yea, I
have found thee,

Yea, I have thirsted for thee,

Yea, long ago with love's bands I
bound thee :

Now the Everlasting Arms surround
thee,—

Through death's darkness I look
and see

And clasp thee to Me.'

Before 1882.

'IF THOU SAYEST, BEHOLD,
WE KNEW IT NOT.'—

PROVERBS xxiv. 11, 12.

I

I HAVE done I know not what,—
what have I done ?

My brother's blood, my brother's
soul, doth cry :

And I find no defence, find no
reply,

No courage more to run this race I run,
Not knowing what I have done, have
left undone ;

Ah me, these awful unknown hours
that fly,

Fruitless it may be, fleeting fruit-
less by,

Rank with death-savour underneath
the sun !

For what avails it that I did not
know

The deed I did ? what profits me
the plea

That had I known I had not wronged
him so ?

Lord Jesus Christ, my God,
him pity Thou ;

Lord, if it may be, pity also me :

In judgment pity, and in death,
and now.

2

Thou Who hast borne all burdens,
bear our load,

Bear Thou our load whatever load
it be ;

Our guilt, our shame, our helpless
misery,

Bear Thou Who only canst, O God
my God.

Seek us and find us, for we cannot
Thee

Or seek or find or hold or cleave
unto :

We cannot do or undo ; Lord,
undo

Our self-undoing, for Thine is the
key

Of all we are not though we might
have been.

Dear Lord, if ever mercy moved
Thy mind,

If so be love of us can move
Thee yet,

If still the nail-prints in Thy Hands
are seen,

Remember us,—yea how
shouldst Thou forget ?

Remember us for good, and seek,
and find.

3

Each soul I might have succoured,
may have slain,

All souls shall face me at the last
Appeal,

That great last moment poised for
woe or weal,

That final moment for man's bliss or
bane.

Vanity of vanities, yea all is vain

Which then will not avail or
help or heal :

Disfeatured faces, worn-out knees
that kneel,

Will more avail than strength or
beauty then.

Lord, by Thy Passion,—when Thy
Face was marred

In sight of earth and hell tumult-
uous,

And Thy heart failed in Thee
like melting wax,

And Thy Blood dropped more
precious than the nard,—

Lord, for Thy sake, not ours,
supply our lacks,
For Thine own sake, not ours,
Christ, pity us.

Before 1882.

THE THREAD OF LIFE

I

THE irresponsible silence of the land,
The irresponsible sounding of the
sea,

Speak both one message of one
sense to me :—

‘Aloof, aloof, we stand aloof ; so
stand

Thou too aloof bound with the flaw-
less band

Of inner solitude ; we bind not
thee ;

But who from thy self-chain shall
set thee free ?

What heart shall touch thy heart ?
what hand thy hand ?’—

And I am sometimes proud and
sometimes meek,

And sometimes I remember days
of old

When fellowship seemed not so far
to seek

And all the world and I seemed
much less cold,

And at the rainbow's foot lay
surely gold,

And hope felt strong and life itself
not weak.

2

Thus am I mine own prison. Every-
thing

Around me free and sunny and at
ease :

Or if in shadow, in a shade of
trees

Which the sun kisses, where the gay
birds sing

And where all winds make various
murmuring ;

Where bees are found, with honey
for the bees ;

Where sounds are music, and
where silences

Are music of an unlike fashioning.

Then gaze I at the merrymaking
crew,

And smile a moment and a
moment sigh,

Thinking, Why can I not rejoice
with you ?

But soon I put the foolish fancy
by :

I am not what I have nor what I
do ;

But what I was I am, I am even I.

3

Therefore myself is that one only
thing

I hold to use or waste, to keep or
give ;

My sole possession every day I
live,

And still mine own despite Time's
winnowing.

Ever mine own, while moons and
seasons bring

From crudeness ripeness mellow
and sanative ;

Ever mine own, till Death shall
ply his sieve ;

And still mine own, when saints
break grave and sing.

And this myself as king unto my
King

I give, to Him Who gave Himself
for me ;

Who gives Himself to me, and bids
me sing

A sweet new song of His redeemed
set free ;

He bids me sing, O Death, where
is thy sting ?

And sing, O grave, where is thy
victory ?

Before 1882.

A SICK CHILD'S MEDITATION

PAIN and weariness, aching eyes
and head,

Pain and weariness all the day
and night :

Yet the pillow's soft on my smooth
soft bed,

And fresh air blows in, and
mother shades the light.

Thou, O Lord, in pain hadst no
pillow soft,

In Thy weary pain, in Thine
agony :

But a cross of shame held Thee up
aloft

Where Thy very mother could do
nought for Thee.

I would gaze on Thee, on Thy
patient face ;

Make me like Thyself, patient,
sweet, at peace ;

Make my days all love, and my
nights all praise,

Till all days and nights and
patient sufferings cease.

Circa 1885.

OUT OF THE DEEP HAVE
I CALLED UNTO THEE,
O LORD.

(From before 1886 to before 1893.)

ALONE Lord God, in Whom our
trust and peace,

Our love and our desire, glow
bright with hope ;

Lift us above this transitory scope
Of earth, these pleasures that begin
and cease,

This moon which wanes, these
seasons which decrease :

We turn to Thee ; as on an
eastern slope

Wheat feels the dawn beneath
night's lingering cope,

Bending and stretching sunward ere
it sees.

Alone Lord God, we see not yet we
know ;

By love we dwell with patience
and desire,

And loving so and so desiring
pray ;

Thy Will be done in earth as
heaven to-day ;

As yesterday it was, to-morrow so ;

Love offering love on love's self-
feeding fire.

Before 1893.

SEVEN vials hold Thy wrath : but
what can hold

Thy mercy save Thine own Infini-
tude,

Boundlessly overflowing with all
good,

All lovingkindness, all delights un-
told ?

Thy Love, of each created love the
mould ;

Thyself, of all the empty pleni-
tude ;

Heard of at Ephrata, found in
the Wood,

For ever One, the Same, and Mani-
fold.

Lord, give us grace to tremble with
that dove

Which Ark-bound winged its
solitary way

And overpast the Deluge in a day,
Whom Noah's hand pulled in and
comforted :

For we who much more hang upon
Thy Love

Behold its shadow in the deed he
did.

Before 1893.

Where neither rust nor moth doth
corrupt.

NERVE us with patience, Lord, to
toil or rest,

Toiling at rest on our allotted
level ;

Unsnared, unscared by world or
flesh or devil,

Fulfilling the good Will of Thy
behest :

Not careful here to hoard, not
here to revel ;

But waiting for our treasure and our
rest

Beyond the fading splendour of the
west,

Beyond this deathstruck life and
deathlier evil.

Not with the sparrow building here
a house :

But with the swallow tabernacled
 so
 As still to poise alert to rise and
 go
 On eager wings with wing-out-
 speeding wills
 Beyond earth's gourds and past her
 almond boughs,
 Past utmost bound of the ever-
 lasting hills.

Before 1893.

As the sparks fly upwards.

LORD, grant us wills to trust Thee
 with such aim
 Of hope and passionate craving
 of desire
 That we may mount aspiring,
 and aspire
 Still while we mount; rejoicing in
 Thy Name,
 Yesterday, this day, day by day the
 Same :
 So sparks fly upward scaling
 heaven by fire,
 Still mount and still attain not,
 yet draw nigher,
 While they have being, to their
 fountain flame.
 To saints who mount, the bottomless
 abyss
 Is as mere nothing, they have set
 their face
 Onward and upward toward that
 blessed place
 Where man rejoices with his God,
 and soul
 With soul, in the unutterable kiss
 Of peace for every victor at the
 goal.

Before 1893.

LORD, make us all love all: that
 when we meet,
 Even myriads of earth's myriads,
 at Thy Bar,
 We may be glad as all true lovers
 are
 Who having parted count reunion
 sweet.
 Safe gathered home around Thy
 blessed Feet,
 Come home by different roads
 from near or far,
 Whether by whirlwind or by
 flaming car,
 From pangs or sleep, safe folded
 round Thy seat.
 Oh if our brother's blood cry out at
 us,
 How shall we meet Thee Who
 • hast loved us all,
 Thee Whom we never loved,
 not loving him ?
 The unloving cannot chant
 with Seraphim,
 Bear harp of gold or palm victorious,
 Or face the Vision Beatifical.

Before 1893.

O LORD, I am ashamed to seek
 Thy Face
 As tho' I loved Thee as Thy
 saints love Thee :
 Yet turn from those Thy lovers,
 look on me,
 Disgrace me not with uttermost
 disgrace ;
 But pour on me ungracious, pour
 Thy grace
 To purge my heart and bid my
 will go free,
 Till I too taste Thy hidden Sweet-
 ness, see

Thy hidden Beauty in the holy
place.

O Thou Who callest sinners to
repent,

Call me Thysinner unto penitence,
For many sins grant me the
greater love :

Set me above the waterfloods,
above

Devil and shifting world and
fleshly sense,

Thy Mercy's all-amazing monument.

Before 1893.

IT is not death, O Christ, to die for
Thee :

Nor is that silence of a silent
land

Which speaks Thy praise so all
may understand :

Darkness of death makes Thy dear
lovers see

Thyself Who Wast and Art and
Art to Be ;

Thyself, more lovely than the
lovely band

Of saints who worship Thee on
either hand,

Loving and loved thro' all eternity.

Death is not death, and therefore
do I hope :

Nor silence silence ; and I there-
fore sing

A very humble hopeful quiet
psalm,

Searching my heart-field for an
offering ;

A handful of sun-courting helio-
trope,

Of myrrh a bundle, and a little
balm.

Before 1893.

LORD, grant us eyes to see and ears
to hear,

And souls to love and minds to
understand,

And steadfast faces toward the
Holy Land,

And confidence of hope, and filial
fear,

And citizenship where Thy saints
appear

Before Thee heart in heart and
hand in hand,

And Alleluias where their chanting
band

As waters and as thunders fill the
sphere.

Lord, grant us what Thou wilt, and
what Thou wilt

Deny, and fold us in Thy peaceful
fold :

Not as the world gives, give to
us Thine own :

Inbuild us where Jerusalem is built
With walls of jasper and with
streets of gold,

And Thou Thyself, Lord Christ,
for Corner Stone.

Before 1893.

'Cried out with Tears.'

LORD, I believe, help Thou mine
unbelief :

Lord, I repent, help mine impeni-
tence :

Hide not Thy Face from me, nor
spurn me hence,

Nor utterly despise me in my grief ;
Nor say me nay, who worship with
the thief

Bemoaning my so long lost in-
nocence :—

Ah me! my penitence a fresh
offence,
Too tardy and too tepid and too
brief.

Lord, must I perish, I who look to
Thee?

Look Thou upon me, bid me live,
not die;

Say 'Come,' say not 'Depart,'
tho' Thou art just:

Yea, Lord, be mindful how out
of the dust

I look to Thee while Thou dost look
on me,

Thou Face to face with me and
Eye to eye.

Before 1893.

O LORD, on Whom we gaze and
dare not gaze,

Increase our faith that gazing we
may see,

And seeing love, and loving
worship Thee

Thro' all our days, our long and
lengthening days.

O Lord, accessible to prayer and
praise,

Kind Lord, Companion of the two
or three,

Good Lord, be gracious to all
men and me,

Lighten our darkness and amend
our ways.

Call up our hearts to Thee, that
where Thou art

Our treasure and our heart may
dwell at one:

Then let the pallid moon pursue
her sun,

So long as it shall please Thee, far
apart,—

Yet art Thou with us, Thou to
Whom we run,
We hand in hand with Thee and
heart in heart.

Before 1893.

'I will come and heal him.'

O LORD God, hear the silence of
each soul,

Its cry unutterable of ruth and
shame,

Its voicelessness of self-contempt
and blame:

Nor suffer harp and palm and aureole
Of multitudes who praise Thee at
the goal

To set aside Thy poor and blind
and lame;

Nor blazing Seraphs utterly to
outflame

The spark that flies up from each
earthly coal.

My price Thy priceless Blood; and
therefore I

Price of Thy priceless Blood am
precious so

That good things love me in
their love of Thee:

I comprehend not why Thou
lovedst me

With Thy so mighty Love; but
this I know,

No man hath greater love than thus
to die.

Before 1893.

AH Lord, Lord, if my heart were
right with Thine

As Thine with mine, then should
I rest resigned,

Awaiting knowledge with a quiet
mind

Because of heavenly wisdom's
anodyne.

Then would Thy Love be more to
me than wine,

Then should I seek being sure at
length to find,

Then should I trust to Thee all
humankind

Because Thy Love of them is more
than mine.

Then should I stir up hope and
comfort me

Remembering Thy Cradle and
Thy Cross ;

How Heaven to Thee without us
had been loss,

How Heaven with us is Thy one
only Heaven,

Heaven shared with us thro' all
eternity,

With us long sought, long loved,
and much forgiven.

Before 1893.

The gold of that land is good.

I LONG for joy, O Lord, I long for
gold,

I long for all Thou profferest to
me,

I long for the unimagined manifold
Abundance laid up in Thy treasury.

I long for pearls, but not from
mundane sea ;

I long for palms, but not from earthly
mould ;

Yet in all else I long for, long for
Thee,

Thyself to hear and worship and
behold.

For Thee, beyond the splendour of
that day

Where all is day and is not any
night ;

For Thee, beyond refreshment
of that rest

To which tired saints press on
for its delight :—

Or if not thus for Thee, yet Thee I
pray

To make me long so till Thou
make me blest.

Before 1893.

WEIGH all my faults and follies
righteously,

Omissions and commissions, sin
on sin ;

Make deep the scale, O Lord, to
weigh them in ;

Yea, set the Accuser vulture-eyed to
see

All loads ingathered which belong
to me :

That so in life the judgement may
begin,

And Angels learn how hard it is
to win

One solitary sinful soul to Thee.

I have no merits for a counterpoise :
Oh vanity my work and hastening

day,

What can I answer to the accusing
voice ?

Lord, drop Thou in the counter-
scale alone

One Drop from Thine own Heart,
and overweigh

My guilt, my folly, even my heart
of stone.

Before 1886.

LORD, grant me grace to love Thee
in my pain,

Thro' all my disappointment love
Thee still,

Thy love my strong foundation
and my hill,
Tho' I be such as cometh not
again,
A fading leaf, a spark upon the
wane :
So evermore do Thou Thy perfect
Will,
Beloved thro' all my good, thro'
all mine ill,
Beloved tho' all my love beside be
vain.

If thus I love Thee, how wilt Thou
love me,

Thou Who art greater than my
heart ? (Amen !)

Wilt Thou bestow a part, with-
hold a part ?

The longing of my heart cries out
to Thee,

The hungering thirsting longing
of my heart :

What I forewent wilt Thou not
grant me then ?

Before 1886.

LORD, make me one with Thine own
faithful ones,

Thy Saints who love Thee and
are loved by Thee ;

Till the day break and till the
shadows flee,

At one with them in alms and
orisons ;

At one with him who toils and him
who runs,

And him who yearns for union
yet to be ;

At one with all who throng the
crystal sea

And wait the setting of our moons
and suns.

Ah my belovèd ones gone on before,

Who looked not back with hand
upon the plough !

If beautiful to me while still in
sight,

How beautiful must be your
aspects now ;

Your unknown, well-known
aspects in that light

Which clouds shall never cloud for
evermore.

Before 1893.

Light of Light.

O CHRIST our Light, Whom even
in darkness we

(So we look up) discern and gaze
upon,

O Christ, Thou loveliest Light
that ever shone,

Thou Light of Light, Fount of all
lights that be,

Grant us clear vision of Thy Light
to see,

Tho' other lights elude us, or
be gone

Into the secret of oblivion,

Or gleam in places higher than
man's degree.

Who looks on Thee looks full on his
desire,

Who looks on Thee looks full on
Very Love :

Looking, he answers well,
'What lack I yet ?'

His heat and cold wait not on earthly
fire,

His wealth is not of earth to
lose or get ;

Earth reels, but he has stored his
store above.

Before 1893.

GIFTS AND GRACES

(From before 1886 to before 1893.)

LOVE loveth Thee, and wisdom
loveth Thee ;

The love that loveth Thee sits
satisfied ;

Wisdom that loveth Thee grows
million-eyed,

Learning what was, and is, and is
to be.

Wisdom and love are glad of all
they see ;

Their heart is deep, their hope is
not denied ;

They rock at rest on time's un-
resting tide,

And wait to rest thro' long eternity.

Wisdom and love and rest, each
holy soul

Hath these to-day while day is
only night :

What shall souls have when
morning brings to light

Love, wisdom, rest, God's treasure
stored above ?

Palm shall they have, and harp and
aureole,

Wisdom, rest, love—and lo ! the
whole is love.

Before 1893.

LORD, give me love that I may love
Thee much,

Yea, give me love that I may love
Thee more,

And all for love may worship and
adore

And touch Thee with love's conse-
crated touch.

I halt to-day ; be love my cheerful
crutch,

My feet to plod, some day my
wings to soar :

Some day ; but, Lord, not any
day before

Thou call me perfect, having made
me such.

This is a day of love, a day of sorrow,
Love tempering sorrow to a sort
of bliss ;

A day that shortens while we
call it long :

A longer day of love will dawn to-
morrow,

A longer, brighter, lovelier day
than this,

Endless, all love, no sorrow,
but a song.

Before 1893.

'As a king, . . . unto the King.'

LOVE doth so grace and dignify

That beggars treat as king with
king

Before the Throne of God most
High :

Love recognizes love's own cry,
And stoops to take love's offering.

A loving heart, tho' soiled and
bruised ;

A kindling heart, tho' cold before ;
Who ever came and was refused

By Love ? Do, Lord, as Thou art
used

To do, and make me love Thee
more.

Before 1886.

O YE who love to-day,

Turn away

From Patience with her silver ray :

For Patience shows a twilight face,
Like a half-lighted moon
When daylight dies apace.

But ye who love to-morrow,
Beg or borrow
To-day some bitterness of sorrow :
For Patience shows a lustrous face,
In depth of night her noon ;
Then to her sun gives place.

Before 1893.

LIFE that was born to-day
Must make no stay
But tend to end
As blossom-bloom of May.
O Lord, confirm my root,
Train up my shoot,
To live and give
Harvest of wholesome fruit.

Life that was born to die
Sets heart on high,
And counts and mounts
Steep stages of the sky.
Two things, Lord, I desire
And I require ;
Love's name, and flame
To wrap my soul in fire.

Life that was born to love
Sends heart above
Both cloud and shroud,
And broods a peaceful dove.
Two things I ask of Thee ;
Deny not me ;
Eyesight and light
Thy Blessed Face to see.

Before 1893.

Perfect Love casteth out Fear.

LORD, give me blessed fear,
And much more blessed love,

That fearing I may love Thee here
And be Thy harmless dove :

Until Thou cast out fear,
Until Thou perfect love,
Until Thou end mine exile here
And fetch Thee home Thy dove.
Before 1893.

HOPE is the counterpoise of fear
While night enthralls us here.

Fear hath a startled eye that holds
a tear :
Hope hath an upward glance, for
dawn draws near
With sunshine and with cheer.
Fear gazing earthwards spies a bier ;
And sets herself to rear
A lamentable tomb where leaves
drop sere,
Bleaching to congruous skeletons
austere :
Hope chants a funeral hymn most
sweet and clear,
And seems true chanticleer
Of resurrection and of all things
dear
In the oncoming endless year.

Fear ballasts hope, hope buoys up
fear,
And both befit us here.
Before 1893.

Subject to like Passions as we are.

WHOSO hath anguish is not dead in
sin,
Whoso hath pangs of utterless
desire.
Like as in smouldering flax which
harbours fire,—

Red heat of conflagration may
begin,
Melt that hard heart, burn out the
dross within,
Permeate with glory the new man
entire,
Crown him with fire, mould for
his hands a lyre
Of fiery strings to sound with those
who win.

Anguish is anguish, yet potential
bliss,
Pangs of desire are birth-throes of
delight ;
Those citizens felt such who walk
in white,
And meet, but no more sunder, with
a kiss ;
Who fathom still-unfathomed mys-
teries,
And love, adore, rejoice, with all
their might.

Before 1893.

EXPERIENCE bows a sweet contented
face,
Still setting-to her seal that God
is true :
Beneath the sun, she knows, is
nothing new ;
All things that go return with meas-
ured pace,
Winds, rivers, man's still recommen-
cing race :—
While Hope beyond earth's circle
strains her view,
Past sun and moon, and rain and
rainbow too,
Enamoured of unseen eternal grace.
Experience saith, ' My God doth all
things well ' :
And for the morrow taketh little
care,

Such peace and patience garrison
her soul :—
While Hope, who never yet hath
eyed the goal,
With arms flung forth, and back-
ward-floating hair,
Touches, embraces, hugs the in-
visible.

Before 1893:

Charity never faileth.

SUCH is Love, it comforts in ex-
tremity,
Tho' a tempest rage around and
rage above,
Tempest beyond tempest, far as eye
can see :
Such is Love

That it simply heeds its mourning
inward Dove ;
Dove which craves contented for a
home to be
Set amid the myrtles of an olive
grove.

Dove-eyed Love contemplates the
Twelve-fruited Tree,
Marks the bowing palms which
worship as they move ;
Simply sayeth, simply prayeth, ' All
for me !'
Such is Love.
Before 1893.

The Greatest of these is Charity.

A MOON impoverished amid stars
curtailed,
A sun of its exuberant lustre shorn,
A transient morning that is
scarcely morn,
A lingering night in double dimness
veiled.—

Our hands are slackened and our strength has failed :

We born to darkness, wherefore were we born ?

No ripening more for olive, grape, or corn :

Faith faints, hope faints, even love himself has paled.

Nay ! love lifts up a face like any rose

Flushing and sweet above a thorny stem,

Softly protesting that the way he knows ;

And as for faith and hope, will carry them

Safe to the gate of New Jerusalem,

Where light shines full and where the palm-tree blows.

Before 1893.

ALL beneath the sun hasteth,
All that hath begun wasteth ;
Earth-notes change in tune
With the changeful moon,
Which waneth
While earth's chant complaineth.

Plumbs the deep, Fear descending ;
Scales the steep, Hope ascending ;
Faith betwixt the twain
Plies both goad and rein,
Half fearing,
All hopeful, day is nearing.

Before 1893.

IF thou be dead, forgive and thou shalt live ;

If thou hast sinned, forgive and be forgiven ;

R

God waiteth to be gracious and forgive,
And open heaven.

Set not thy will to die and not to live ;

Set not thy face as flint refusing heaven ;

Thou fool, set not thy heart on hell : forgive

And be forgiven.

Before 1893.

Let Patience have her perfect work.

CAN man rejoice who lives in hourly fear ?

Can man make haste who toils beneath a load ?

Can man feel rest who has no fixed abode ?

All he lays hold of, or can see or hear,

Is passing by, is prompt to disappear,

Is doomed, foredoomed, continueth in no stay :

This day he breathes in is his latter day,

This year of time is this world's latter year.

Thus in himself is he most miserable :
Out of himself, Lord, lift him up

to Thee,

Out of himself and all these worlds that flee ;

Hold him in patience underneath the rod,

Anchor his hope beyond life's ebb and swell,

Perfect his patience in the love of God.

Before 1893.

T

PATIENCE must dwell with Love, for
 Love and Sorrow
 Have pitched their tent together
 here :
 Love all alone will build a house to-
 morrow,
 And Sorrow not be near.

To-day for Love's sake hope ; still
 hope in Sorrow,
 Rest in her shade and hold her
 dear.

To-day she nurses thee ; and lo
 to-morrow
 Love only will be near.

Before 1893.

Let everything that hath breath praise
 the Lord.

ALL that we see rejoices in the
 sunshine,
 All that we hear makes merry in
 the Spring :

God grant us such a mind to be
 glad after our kind,
 And to sing
 His praises evermore for every-
 thing.

Much that we see must vanish with
 the sunshine,
 Sweet Spring must fail, and fail
 the choir of Spring :
 But Wisdom shall burn on when
 the lesser lights are gone,
 And shall sing
 God's praises evermore for every-
 thing.

Before 1893.

WHAT is the beginning? Love.
 What the course? Love still.
 What the goal? The goal is Love
 on the happy hill.
 Is there nothing then but Love,
 search we sky or earth?
 There is nothing out of Love hath
 perpetual worth :
 All things flag but only Love, all
 things fail or flee ;
 There is nothing left but Love
 worthy you and me.

Before 1893.

LORD, make me pure :
 Only the pure shall see Thee as
 Thou art,
 And shall endure.
 Lord, bring me low ;
 For Thou wert lowly in Thy blessed
 heart :
 Lord, keep me so.

Before 1893.

LOVE, to be love, must walk Thy
 way
 And work Thy Will ;
 Or if Thou say ' Lie still,'
 Lie still and pray.

Love, Thine own Bride, with all
 her might
 Will follow Thee,
 And till the shadows flee
 Keep Thee in sight.

Love will not mar her peaceful face
 With cares undue,
 Faithless and hopeless too
 And out of place.

Love, knowing Thou much more
 art Love,
 Will sun her grief,
 And pluck her myrtle-leaf,
 And be Thy dove.

Love here hath vast beatitude :
 What shall be hers
 Where there is no more curse,
 But all is good ?

Before 1893.

LORD, I am feeble and of mean
 account :
 Thou Who dost condescend as well
 as mount,
 Stoop Thou Thyself to me
 And grant me grace to hear and
 grace to see.

Lord, if Thou grant me grace to
 hear and see
 Thy very Self Who stoopest thus
 to me,
 I make but slight account
 Of aught beside wherein to sink
 or mount.

Before 1893.

TUNE me, O Lord, into one harmony
 With Thee, one full responsive
 vibrant chord ;
 Unto Thy praise, all love and
 melody,
 Tune me, O Lord.

Thus need I flee nor death nor
 fire nor sword :
 A little while these be, then cease
 to be ;
 And sent by Thee not these
 should be abhorred.

Devil and world gird me with
 strength to flee,
 To flee the flesh, and arm me
 with Thy word :

As Thy Heart is to my heart, unto
 Thee

Tune me, O Lord.

Before 1893.

They shall be as white as snow.

WHITENESS most white. Ah to be
 clean again

In mine own sight and God's
 most holy sight !

To reach thro' any flood or fire of
 pain

Whiteness most white :

To learn to hate the wrong and
 love the right
 Even while I walk thro' shadows
 that are vain,
 Descending thro' vain shadows
 into night.

Lord, not to-day : yet some day
 bliss for bane

Give me, for mortal frailty give
 me might,

Give innocence for guilt, and for
 my stain

Whiteness most white.

Before 1893.

THY lilies drink the dew,
 Thy lambs the rill, and I will
 drink them too ;

For those in purity
 And innocence are types, dear Lord,
 of Thee.

The fragrant lily flower

Bows and fulfils Thy Will its lifelong
hour ;

The lamb at rest and play
Fulfils Thy Will in gladness all the
day ;

They leave to-morrow's cares
Until the morrow, what it brings it
bears.

And I, Lord, would be such ;
Not high or great or anxious over-
much,

But pure and temperate,
Earnest to do Thy Will betimes and
late,

Fragrant with love and praise
And innocence thro' all my appointed
days ;

Thy lily I would be,
Spotless and sweet, Thy lamb to
follow Thee.

Before 1886.

When I was in trouble I called upon the
Lord.

A BURDENED heart that bleeds and
bears

And hopes and waits in pain,
And faints beneath its fears and
cares,

Yet hopes again :

Wilt Thou accept the heart I bring,
O gracious Lord and kind,
To ease it of a torturing sting,
And staunch and bind ?

Alas, if Thou wilt none of this,
None else have I to give :
Look Thou upon it as it is,
Accept, relieve.

Or if Thou wilt not yet relieve,
Be not extreme to sift ;
Accept a faltering will to give,
Itself Thy gift.

Before 1886.

GRANT us such grace that we may
work Thy Will
And speak Thy words and walk
before Thy Face,
Profound and calm, like waters deep
and still :
Grant us such grace.

Not hastening and not loitering
in our pace
For gloomiest valley or for sultriest
hill,
Content and fearless on our down-
ward race.

As rivers seek a sea they cannot fill
But are themselves filled full in
its embrace,
Absorbed, at rest, each river and
each rill :

Grant us such grace.

Before 1893.

Who hath despised the day of small
things ?

AS violets so be I recluse and sweet,
Cheerful as daisies unaccounted
rare,
Still sunward-gazing from a lowly
seat,
Still sweetening wintry air.

While half-awakened Spring lags
incomplete,
While lofty forest trees tower
bleak and bare,

Daisies and violets own remotest
heat
And bloom and make them fair.
Before 1893.

'Do this, and he doeth it.'

CONTENT to come, content to go,
Content to wrestle or to race,
Content to know or not to know,
Each in his place ;

Lord, grant us grace to love Thee so
That glad of heart and glad of face
At last we may sit, high or low,
Each in his place ;

Where pleasures flow as rivers flow,
And loss has left no barren trace,
And all that are are perfect so,
Each in his place.
Before 1893.

'That no man take thy Crown.'

BE faithful unto death. Christ
proffers thee
Crown of a life that draws
immortal breath :
To thee He saith, yea and He saith
to me,
'Be faithful unto death.'

To every living soul that same He
saith,
'Be faithful' : — whatsoever else we
be,
Let us be faithful, challenging His
faith.

Tho' trouble storm around us like
the sea,
Tho' hell surge up to scare us and
to scathe,

Tho' heaven and earth betake them-
selves to flee,
'Be faithful unto death.'
Before 1893.

Ye are come unto Mount Sion.

FEAR, Faith, and Hope, have sent
their hearts above :

Prudence, Obedience, and Hu-
mility,

Climb at their call, all scaling
heaven toward Love.

Fear hath least grace but great
expediency ;

Faith and Humility show grave
and strong ;

Prudence and Hope mount
balanced equally.

Obedience marches marshalling
their throng,

Goes first, goes last, to left hand
or to right ;

And all the six uplift a pilgrim's
song.

By day they rest not, nor they rest
by night :

While Love within them, with
them, over them,

Weans them and woos them from
the dark to light.

Each plies for staff not reed with
broken stem,

But olive branch in pledge of
patient peace ;

Till Love being theirs in New
Jerusalem

Transfigure them to Love, and so
they cease.

Love is the sole beatitude above :
All other graces, to their vast
increase

Of glory, look on Love and mirror
Love.

Before 1893.

Sit down in the lowest room.

LORD, give me grace
To take the lowest place ;
Nor even desire,
Unless it be Thy Will, to go up
higher.

Except by grace,
I fail of lowest place ;
Except desire
Sit low, it aims awry to go up higher.

Before 1893.

Lord, it is good for us to be here.

GRANT us, O Lord, that patience
and that faith :

Faith's patience imperturbable in
Thee,

Hope's patience till the long-
drawn shadows flee,

Love's patience unresentful of all
scathe.

Verily we need patience breath by
breath ;

Patience while Faith holds up her
glass to see,

While Hope toils yoked in Fear's
copartnery,

And Love goes softly on the way to
death.

How gracious and how perfecting a
grace

Must Patience be on which those
others wait :

Faith with suspended rapture in her
face,

Hope pale and careful hand in
hand with Fear,

Love—ah good Love who would not
antedate

God's Will, but saith, Good is it
to be here.

Before 1893.

LORD, grant us grace to rest upon
Thy word,

To rest in hope until we see Thy
Face ;

To rest thro' toil unruffled and un-
stirred,

Lord, grant us grace.

This burden and this heat wear
on apace :

Night comes, when sweeter than
night's singing bird

Will swell the silence of our
ended race.

Ah songs which flesh and blood
have never heard

And cannot hear, songs of the
silent place

Where rest remains ! Lord, slake
our hope deferred,

Lord, grant us grace !

Before 1893.

CHRISTMAS CAROLS

I

WHOSO hears a chiming for Christ-
mas at the nighest

Hears a sound like Angels chant-
ing in their glee,

Hears a sound like palm boughs
waving in the highest,

Hears a sound like ripple of a
crystal sea.

Sweeter than a prayer-bell for a
saint in dying,

Sweeter than a death-bell for a
saint at rest,

Music struck in Heaven with earth's
faint replying,

'Life is good, and death is good,
for Christ is Best.'

2

A holy heavenly chime
Rings fulness in of time,
And on His Mother's breast
Our Lord God ever-Blest
Is laid a Babe at rest.

Stoop, Spirits unused to stoop,
Swoop, Angels, flying swoop,
Adoring as you gaze,
Uplifting hymns of praise :—
'Grace to the Full of Grace!'

The cave is cold and strait
To hold the angelic state :
More strait it is, more cold,
To foster and infold
Its Maker one hour old.

Thrilled through with awestruck
love,
Meek Angels poised above,
To see their God, look down :
'What, is there never a Crown
For Him in swaddled gown ?

'How comes He soft and weak
With such a tender cheek,
With such a soft small hand ?—
The very Hand which spann'd
Heaven when its girth was plann'd.

'How comes He with a voice
Which is but baby-noise ?—
That Voice which spake with might
"Let there be light"—and light
Sprang out before our sight.

'What need hath He of flesh
Made flawless now afresh ?

What need of human heart ?—
Heart that must bleed and smart,
Choosing the better part.

'But see : His gracious smile
Dismisses us a while
To serve Him in His kin.
Haste we, make haste, begin
To fetch His brethren in.'

Like stars they flash and shoot,
The Shepherds they salute :
'Glory to God' they sing :
'Good news of peace we bring,
For Christ is born a King.'

3

Lo ! newborn Jesus
Soft and weak and small,
Wrapped in baby's bands
By His Mother's hands,
Lord God of all.

Lord God of Mary,
Whom His Lips caress
While He rocks to rest
On her milky breast
In helplessness.

Lord God of shepherds
Flocking through the cold,
Flocking through the dark
To the only Ark,
The only Fold.

Lord God of all things
Be they near or far,
Be they high or low ;
Lord of storm and snow,
Angel and star.

Lord God of all men,—
 My Lord and my God!
 Thou who lovest me,
 Keep me close to Thee
 By staff and rod.

Lo! newborn Jesus
 Loving great and small,
 Love's free Sacrifice,
 Opening Arms and Eyes
 To one and all.

Circa 1887.

A HOPE CAROL

A NIGHT was near, a day was near;
 Between a day and night
 I heard sweet voices calling clear,
 Calling me:
 I heard a whirr of wing on wing,
 But could not see the sight;
 I long to see the birds that sing,
 I long to see.

Below the stars, beyond the moon,
 Between the night and day,
 I heard a rising falling tune
 Calling me:
 I long to see the pipes and strings
 Whereon such minstrels play;
 I long to see each face that sings,
 I long to see.

To-day or may be not to-day,
 To-night or not to-night,
 All voices that command or pray,
 Calling me,
 Shall kindle in my soul such fire
 And in my eyes such light
 That I shall see that heart's desire
 I long to see.

Before 1889.

CARDINAL NEWMAN

In the grave whither thou goest.

O WEARY Champion of the Cross, lie
 still:

Sleep thou at length the all-
 embracing sleep:

Long was thy sowing-day, rest
 now and reap:

Thy fast was long, feast now thy
 spirit's fill.

Yea take thy fill of love, because thy
 will

Chose love not in the shallows but
 the deep:

Thy tides were spring-tides, set
 against the neap

Of calmer souls: thy flood rebuked
 their rill.

Now night has come to thee—please
 God, of rest:

So some time must it come to
 every man;

To first and last, where many
 last are first.

Now fixed and finished thine
 eternal plan,

Thy best has done its best, thy
 worst its worst:

Thy best its best, please God, thy
 best its best.

16 August 1890.

YEA I HAVE A GOODLY HERITAGE

My vineyard that is mine I have to
 keep,

Pruning for fruit the pleasant twigs
 and leaves.

Tend thou thy cornfield : one day
 thou shalt reap
 In joy thy ripened sheaves.

Or, if thine be an orchard, graft and
 prop
 Food-bearing trees each watered
 in its place :
 Or, if a garden, let it yield for crop
 Sweet herbs and herb of grace.—

But if my lot be sand where nothing
 grows ?—

Nay who hath said it ? Tune a
 thankful psalm :
 For, though thy desert bloom not as
 the rose,
 It yet can rear thy palm.

Circa 1890.

A CANDLEMAS DIALOGUE

‘ LOVE brought Me down : and can
 not love make thee
 Carol for joy to Me ?
 Hear cheerful robin carol from his
 tree,
 Who owes not half to Me
 I won for thee.’

‘ Yea, Lord, I hear his carol’s word-
 less voice ;
 And well may he rejoice
 Who hath not heard of death’s dis-
 cordant noise.
 So might I too rejoice
 With such a voice.’

‘ True, thou hast compassed death :
 but hast not thou
 The tree of life’s own bough ?

Am I not Life and Resurrection
 now ?

My Cross, balm-bearing bough
 For such as thou.’

‘ Ah me, Thy Cross !——but that
 seems far away ;
 Thy Cradle-song to-day
 I too would raise and worship Thee
 and pray :
 Not empty, Lord, to-day
 Send me away.’

‘ If thou wilt not go empty, spend
 thy store ;
 And I will give thee more,
 Yea, make thee ten times richer than
 before.
 Give more and give yet more
 Out of thy store.’

‘ Because Thou givest me Thyself, I
 will
 Thy blessed word fulfil,
 Give with both hands, and hoard by
 giving still :
 Thy pleasure to fulfil,
 And work Thy Will.’

Before 1891.

MARY MAGDALENE AND THE OTHER MARY

A SONG FOR ALL MARIES

OUR Master lies asleep and is at
 rest :

His Heart has ceased to bleed, His
 Eye to weep :

The sun ashamed has dropt down in
 the west :

Our Master lies asleep.

Now we are they who weep, and
trembling keep
Vigil, with wrung heart in a sighing
breast,
While slow time creeps, and slow
the shadows creep.

Renew Thy youth, as eagle from the
nest ;

O Master, who hast sown, arise to
reap :—

No cock-crow yet, no flush on
eastern crest :

Our Master lies asleep.

Before 1891.

A DEATH OF A FIRST-BORN

(14 January 1892.)

ONE young life lost, two happy
young lives blighted,

With earthward eyes we see :

With eyes uplifted, keener, farther-
sighted,

We look, O Lord, to Thee.

Grief hears a funeral knell : Hope
hears the ringing

Of birthday bells on high ;

Faith, Hope, and Love, make answer
with soft singing,

Half carol and half cry.

Stoop to console us, Christ, sole
consolation,

While dust returns to dust ;

Until that blessed day when all Thy
nation

Shall rise up of the Just.

January 1892.

FAINT YET PURSUING

I

BEYOND this shadow and this turbu-
lent sea,

Shadow of death and turbulent
sea of death,

Lies all we long to have or long to
be.

Take heart, tired man, toil on
with lessening breath,

Lay violent hands on heaven's high
treasury,

Be what you long to be through
life-long scathe.

A little while Hope leans on
Charity,

A little while Charity heartens
Faith :

A little while : and then what
further while ?

One while that ends not and that
wearies not,

For ever new whilst evermore
the same.

All things made new bear each
a sweet new name ;

Man's lot of death has turned to
life his lot,

And tearful Charity to Love's own
smile.

2

Press onward, quickened souls, who
mounting move,

Press onward, upward, fire with
mounting fire ;

Gathering volume of untold
desire,

Press upward, homeward, dove with
 mounting dove.
 Point me the excellent way that
 leads above ;
 Woo me with sequent will, me
 too to aspire ;
 With sequent heart to follow
 higher and higher,
 To follow all who follow on to
 Love.
 Up the high steep, across the golden
 sill,
 Up out of shadows into very
 light,
 Up out of dwindling life to life
 aglow,
 I watch you, my beloved, out of
 sight ;—
 Sight fails me, and my heart is
 watching still :
 My heart fails, yet I follow on
 to know.

Circa 1892.

THE WORLD. SELF-DESTRUCTION

(Before 1893.)

A vain Shadow.

THE world, — what a world, ah
 me !
 Mouldy, worm-eaten, grey :
 Vain as a leaf from a tree,
 As a fading day,
 As veriest vanity,
 As the froth and the spray
 Of the hollow-billowed sea,
 As what was and shall not be,
 As what is and passes away.

Lord, save us, we perish.

O LORD, seek us, O Lord, find us
 In Thy patient care ;
 Be Thy Love before, behind us,
 Round us, everywhere :
 Lest the god of this world blind us,
 Lest he speak us fair,
 Lest he forge a chain to bind us,
 Lest he bait a snare.
 Turn not from us, call to mind us,
 Find, embrace us, bear ;
 Be Thy Love before, behind us,
 Round us, everywhere.

WHAT is this above thy head,
 O Man ?—
 The World, all overspread
 With pearls and golden rays
 And gems ablaze ;
 A sight which day and night
 Fills an eye's span.

What is this beneath thy feet,
 O Saint ?—
 The World, a nauseous sweet
 Puffed up and perishing ;
 A hollow thing,
 A lie, a vanity,
 Tinsel and paint.

What is she while time is
 time,
 O Man ?—
 In a perpetual prime
 Beauty and youth she hath ;
 And her footpath
 Breeds flowers thro' dancing hours
 Since time began.

While time lengthens what is she,
 O Saint?—
 Nought : yea, all men shall see
 How she is nought at all,
 When her death-pall
 Of fire ends their desire
 And brands her taint.

Ah poor Man, befooled and slow
 And faint !
 Ah poorest Man, if so
 Thou turn thy back on bliss
 And choose amiss !
 For thou art choosing now :
 Sinner,—or Saint.

Babylon the Great.

FOUL is she and ill-favoured, set
 askew :
 Gaze not upon her till thou dream
 her fair,
 Lest she should mesh thee in her
 wanton hair,
 Adept in arts grown old yet ever
 new.
 Her heart lusts not for love, but
 thro' and thro'
 For blood, as spotted panther
 lusts in lair ;
 No wine is in her cup, but filth is
 there
 Unutterable, with plagues hid out of
 view.
 Gaze not upon her, for her dancing
 whirl
 Turns giddy the fixed gazer
 presently :
 Gaze not upon her, lest thou be
 as she
 When, at the far end of her long
 desire,

Her scarlet vest and gold and gem
 and pearl
 And she amid her pomp are set
 on fire.

Standing afar off for the fear of her torment.

Is this the end ? is there no end but
 this ?
 Yea, none beside :
 No other end for pride
 And foulness and besottedness.

Hath she no friend ? hath she no
 clinging friend ?
 Nay, none at all ;
 Who stare upon her fall
 Quake for themselves with hair on
 end.

Will she be done away ? vanish
 away ?
 Yea, like a dream ;
 Yea, like the shades that seem
 Somewhat, and lo are nought by day.

Alas for her amid man's helpless
 moan,
 Alas for her !
 She hath no comforter :
 In solitude of fire she sits alone.

O Lucifer, Son of the Morning !

O **FALLEN** star ! a darkened light,
 A glory hurtled from its car,
 Self-blasted from the holy height :
 O fallen star !

Fallen beyond earth's utmost bar,
 Beyond return, beyond far sight
 Of outmost glimmering nebular.

Now blackness, which once walked
in white ;
Now death, whose life once glowed
afar ;
O son of dawn that loved the night,
O fallen star !

ALAS, alas ! for the self-destroyed
Vanish as images from a glass,
Sink down and die down by hope
unbuoyed :—
Alas, alas !

Who shall stay their ruinous
mass ?
Besotted, reckless, possessed, de-
coyed,
They hurry to the dolorous pass.

Saints fall a-weeping who would
have joyed,
Sore they weep for a glory that
was,
For a fulness emptied into the void,
Alas, alas !

AS froth on the face of the deep,
As foam on the crest of the sea,
As dreams at the waking of sleep,
As gourd of a day and a night,
As harvest that no man shall reap,
As vintage that never shall be,
Is hope if it cling not aright,
O my God, unto Thee.

Where their worm dieth not, and the fire
is not quenched.

IN tempest and storm, blackness of
darkness for ever,
A fire unextinguished, a worm's
indestructible swarm ;

Where no hope shall ever be more,
and love shall be never,
In tempest and storm ;
Where the form of all things is
fashionless, void of all form ;
Where from death that severeth all,
the soul cannot sever
In tempest and storm.

TOLL, bell, toll. For hope is flying
Sighing from the earthbound soul :
Life is sighing, life is dying :
Toll, bell, toll.

Gropes in its own grave the mole,
Wedding darkness, undescribing,
Tending to no different goal.

Self-slain soul, in vain thy sighing :
Self-slain, who should make thee
whole ?
Vain the clamour of thy crying :
Toll, bell, toll.

ALL THINGS

JESUS alone :—if thus it were to
me ;
Yet thus it cannot be ;
Lord, I have all things if I have
but Thee.

Jesus and all :—precious His
bounties are,
Yet He more precious far ;
Day's-eyes are many, one the
Morning Star.

Jesus my all :—so let me rest in love,
Thy peaceable poor dove,
Some time below till timeless time
above.

Before 1893.

HEAVEN OVERARCHES

HEAVEN overarches earth and sea,
 Earth-sadness and sea-bitterness.
 Heaven overarches you and me :
 A little while and we shall be—
 Please God—where there is no more
 sea
 Nor barren wilderness.

Heaven overarches you and me,
 And all earth's gardens and her
 graves.
 Look up with me, until we see
 The day break and the shadows
 flee.
 What though to-night wrecks you
 and me
 If so to-morrow saves?
Circa 1893.

GENERAL POEMS

A PORTRAIT

I

SHE gave up beauty in her tender
 youth,
 Gave all her hope and joy and
 pleasant ways ;
 She covered up her eyes lest they
 should gaze
 On vanity, and chose the bitter
 truth.
 Harsh towards herself, towards
 others full of ruth,
 Servant of servants, little known
 to praise,
 Long prayers and fasts trenched
 on her nights and days :
 She schooled herself to sights and
 sounds uncouth
 That with the poor and stricken she
 might make
 A home, until the least of all
 sufficed

Her wants ; her own self learned
 she to forsake,
 Counting all earthly gain but hurt
 and loss.
 So with calm will she chose and
 bore the cross
 And hated all for love of Jesus
 Christ.
21 November 1850.

2

They knelt in silent anguish by her
 bed,
 And could not weep ; but calmly
 there she lay.
 All pain had left her ; and the
 sun's last ray
 Shone through upon her, warming
 into red
 The shady curtains. In her heart
 she said :
 ' Heaven opens ; I leave these
 and go away ;

The Bridegroom calls,—shall the
Bride seek to stay?’

Then low upon her breast she bowed
her head.

O lily flower, O gem of priceless
worth,

O dove with patient voice and
patient eyes,

O fruitful vine amid a land of
dearth,

O maid replete with loving
purities,

Thou bowedst down thy head with
friends on earth

To raise it with the saints in
Paradise.

24 February 1847.

THE WHOLE HEAD IS SICK AND THE WHOLE HEART FAINT.

WOE for the young who say that life
is long,

Who turn from the sun-rising to
the West,

Who feel no pleasure and can
find no rest,

Who in the morning sigh for even-
song.

Their hearts, weary because of this
world's wrong,

Yearn with a thousand longings
unexpressed ;

They have a wound no mortal
ever drest,

An ill than all earth's remedies
more strong.

For them the fount of gladness hath
run dry,

And in all Nature is no pleasant
thing ;

For them there is no glory in the
sky,

No sweetness in the breezes' mur-
muring :

They say, 'The peace of heaven is
placed too high,

And this earth changeth and is
perishing.'

6 December 1847.

VANITY OF VANITIES

AH woe is me for pleasure that is
vain,

Ah woe is me for glory that is
past !

Pleasure that bringeth sorrow at
the last,

Glory that at the last bringeth no
gain.

So saith the sinking heart ; and so
again

It shall say till the mighty angel-
blast

Is blown, making the sun and
moon aghast,

And showering down the stars like
sudden rain.

And evermore men shall go fear-
fully,

Bending beneath their weight of
heaviness ;

And ancient men shall lie down
wearily,

And strong men shall rise up in
weariness :

Yea even the young shall answer
sighingly,

Saying one to another 'How vain
it is !'

1847.

THREE STAGES

I.—A PAUSE OF THOUGHT

I LOOKED for that which is not, nor
 can be,
 And hope deferred made my
 heart sick in truth :
 But years must pass before a hope
 of youth
 Is resigned utterly.

I watched and waited with a stead-
 fast will :
 And though the object seemed to
 flee away
 That I so longed for, ever day
 by day
 I watched and waited still.

Sometimes I said : 'This thing shall
 be no more ;
 My expectation wearies and shall
 cease ;
 I will resign it now and be at
 peace ' :
 Yet never gave it o'er.

Sometimes I said : 'It is an empty
 name
 I long for ; to a name why should
 I give
 The peace of all the days I have
 to live ? '—
 Yet gave it all the same.

Alas thou foolish one ! alike unfit
 For healthy joy and salutary pain :
 Thou knowest the chase useless,
 and again
 Turnest to follow it.

14 February 1848.

2.—THE END OF THE FIRST PART

My happy happy dream is finished
 with,
 My dream in which alone I lived
 so long.
 My heart slept—woe is me, it
 wakeneth ;
 Was weak—I thought it strong.

Oh weary wakening from a life-true
 dream !
 Oh pleasant dream from which I
 wake in pain !
 I rested all my trust on things that
 seem,
 And all my trust is vain.

I must pull down my palace that I
 built,
 Dig up the pleasure-gardens of
 my soul ;
 Must change my laughter to sad
 tears for guilt,
 My freedom to control.

Now all the cherished secrets of my
 heart,
 Now all my hidden hopes, are
 turned to sin.
 Part of my life is dead, part sick,
 and part
 Is all on fire within.

The fruitless thought of what I
 might have been,
 Haunting me ever, will not let
 me rest.
 A cold North wind has withered all
 my green,
 My sun is in the West.

But, where my palace stood, with
the same stone

I will uprear a shady hermitage :
And there my spirit shall keep house
alone,

Accomplishing its age.

There other garden-beds shall lie
around,

Full of sweet-briar and incense-
bearing thyme :

There I will sit, and listen for the
sound

Of the last lingering chime.

18 April 1849.

3

I THOUGHT to deal the death-stroke
at a blow :

To give all, once for all, but never
more :—

Then sit to hear the low waves fret
the shore,

Or watch the silent snow.

‘Oh rest,’ I thought, ‘in silence and
the dark :

Oh rest, if nothing else, from head to
feet :

Though I may see no more the
poppied wheat,

Or sunny soaring lark.

‘These chimes are slow, but surely
strike at last :

This sand is slow, but surely drop-
peth through :

And much there is to suffer, much
to do,

Before the time be past.

‘So will I labour, but will not rejoice :
Will do and bear, but will not hope
again :

R

Gone dead alike to pulses of quick
pain

And pleasure’s counterpoise.’

I said so in my heart : and so I
thought

My life would lapse, a tedious mono-
tone :

I thought to shut myself and dwell
alone

Unseeking and unsought.

But first I tired, and then my care
grew slack,

Till my heart dreamed, and maybe
wandered too :—

I felt the sunshine glow again, and
knew

The swallow on its track :

All birds awoke to building in the
leaves,

All buds awoke to fullness and sweet
scent :

Ah too my heart woke unawares,
intent

On fruitful harvest-sheaves.

Full pulse of life, that I had deemed
was dead ;

Full throb of youth, that I had
deemed at rest.

Alas I cannot build myself a nest,
I cannot crown my head

With royal purple blossoms for the
feast,

Nor flush with laughter, nor exult in
song :—

These joys may drift, as time now
drifts along ;

And cease, as once they ceased.

U

I may pursue, and yet may not attain,
Athirst and panting all the days I
live :

Or seem to hold, yet nerve myself to
give

What once I gave, again.

25 July 1854.

LADY MONTREVOR

I DO not look for love that is a
dream—

I only seek for courage to be still ;
To bear my grief with an unbend-
ing will,

And when I am a-weary not to seem.
Let the round world roll on ; let the
sun beam ;

Let the wind blow, and let the
rivers fill

The everlasting sea, and on the
hill

The palms almost touch heaven, as
children deem.

And, though young spring and
summer pass away,

And autumn and cold winter come
again,

And though my soul, being tired
of its pain,

Pass from the ancient earth, and
though my clay

Return to dust, my tongue shall
not complain ;—

No man shall mock me after this my
day.

18 February 1848.

SONG

SHE sat and sang alway

By the green margin of a stream,
Watching the fishes leap and play
Beneath the glad sunbeam.

I sat and wept alway

Beneath the moon's most shadowy
beam,

Watching the blossoms of the May
Weep leaves into the stream.

I wept for memory ;

She sang for hope that is so fair :
My tears were swallowed by the sea ;
Her songs died on the air.

26 November 1848.

BITTER FOR SWEET

SUMMER is gone with all its roses,

Its sun and perfumes and sweet
flowers,

Its warm air and refreshing
showers :

And even Autumn closes.

Yea, Autumn's chilly self is going,

And Winter comes which is yet
colder ;

Each day the hoar-frost waxes
bolder,

And the last buds cease
blowing.

1 December 1848.

SONG

WHEN I am dead, my dearest,

Sing no sad songs for me ;

Plant thou no roses at my head,

Nor shady cypress tree :

Be the green grass above me

With showers and dewdrops wet :

And if thou wilt, remember,

And if thou wilt, forget.

I shall not see the shadows,

I shall not feel the rain ;

I shall not hear the nightingale

Sing on as if in pain :

And dreaming through the twilight
That doth not rise nor set,
Haply I may remember,
And haply may forget.
12 December 1848.

ON KEATS

A GARDEN in a garden: a green spot
Where all is green: most fitting
slumber-place
For the strong man grown weary
of a race
Soon over. Unto him a goodly lot
Hath fallen in fertile ground; there
thorns are not,
But his own daisies; silence, full
of grace,
Surely hath shed a quiet on his
face;
His earth is but sweet leaves that
fall and rot.
What was his record of himself, ere
he
Went from us? 'Here lies one
whose name was writ
In water.' While the chilly
shadows flit
Of sweet St. Agnes' Eve, while
basil springs—
His name, in every humble heart
that sings,
Shall be a fountain of love, verily.
18 January 1849 (Eve of St. Agnes).

HAVE PATIENCE

THE goblets all are broken,
The pleasant wine is spilt,
The songs cease. If thou wilt,
Listen, and hear truth spoken.
We take thought for the morrow,
And know not we shall see it;

We look on death with sorrow,
And cannot flee it.
Youth passes like the lightning,
Not to return again,—
Just for a little bright'ning
The confines of a plain,
Gilding the spires, and whit'ning
The gravestones and the slain.
Youth passes like the odour
From the white rose's cup
When the hot sun drinks up
The dew that overflowed her:
Then life forsakes the petals
That had been very fair;
No beauty lingers there,
And no bee settles.
But, when the rose is dead
And the leaves fallen,
And when the earth has spread
A snow-white pall on,
The thorn remains, once hidden
By the green growth above it—
A darksome guest unbidden,
With none to love it.
Manhood is turbulent,
And old age tires;
That hath no still content,
This no desires.
The present hath even less
Joy than the past,
And more cares fret it:—
Life is a weariness
From first to last—
Let us forget it:
Fill high and deep!—But how?
The goblets all are broken.
Nay then, have patience now:
For this is but a token
We soon shall have no need
Of such to cheer us;
The palm-branches decreed
And crowns to be our meed
Are very near us.
23 January 1849.

SONG

OH roses for the flush of youth,
And laurel for the perfect prime ;
But pluck an ivy branch for me
Grown old before my time.

Oh violets for the grave of youth,
And bay for those dead in their
prime ;
Give me the withered leaves I chose
Before in the old time.

6 February 1849.

AN END

LOVE, strong as Death, is dead.
Come, let us make his bed
Among the dying flowers :
A green turf at his head ;
And a stone at his feet,
Whereon we may sit
In the quiet evening hours.

He was born in the spring,
And died before the harvesting :
On the last warm summer day
He left us ; he would not stay
For autumn twilight cold and grey.
Sit we by his grave, and sing
He is gone away.

To few chords and sad and low
Sing we so :
Be our eyes fixed on the grass
Shadow-veiled as the years pass,
While we think of all that was
In the long ago.

5 March 1849.

DREAM LAND

WHERE sunless rivers weep
Their waves into the deep,

She sleeps a charmed sleep :
Awake her not.
Led by a single star,
She came from very far
To seek where shadows are
Her pleasant lot.

She left the rosy morn,
She left the fields of corn,
For twilight cold and lorn
And water springs.
Through sleep, as through a veil,
She sees the sky look pale,
And hears the nightingale
That sadly sings.

Rest, rest, a perfect rest
Shed over brow and breast ;
Her face is toward the west,
The purple land.
She cannot see the grain
Ripening on hill and plain,
She cannot feel the rain
Upon her hand.

Rest, rest, for evermore
Upon a mossy shore ;
Rest, rest at the heart's core
Till time shall cease :
Sleep that no pain shall wake ;
Night that no morn shall break,
Till joy shall overtake
Her perfect peace.

April 1849.

AFTER DEATH

THE curtains were half drawn, the
floor was swept
And strewn with rushes, rosemary
and may
Lay thick upon the bed on which
I lay,

Where through the lattice ivy-
 shadows crept,
 He leaned above me, thinking that
 I slept
 And could not hear him; but I
 heard him say,
 'Poor child, poor child': and as
 he turned away
 Came a deep silence, and I knew he
 wept.
 He did not touch the shroud, or
 raise the fold
 That hid my face, or take my
 hand in his,
 Or ruffle the smooth pillows for
 my head :
 He did not love me living; but
 once dead
 He pitied me; and very sweet it
 is
 To know he still is warm though I
 am cold.

28 April 1849.

REST

O EARTH, lie heavily upon her eyes ;
 Seal her sweet eyes weary of
 watching, Earth ;
 Lie close around her; leave no
 room for mirth
 With its harsh laughter, nor for
 sound of sighs.
 She hath no questions, she hath no
 replies,
 Hushed in and curtained with a
 blessed dearth
 Of all that irked her from the
 hour of birth ;
 With stillness that is almost Paradise.
 Darkness more clear than noonday
 holdeth her,
 Silence more musical than any
 song ;

Even her very heart has ceased to
 stir :
 Until the morning of Eternity
 Her rest shall not begin nor end,
 but be ;
 And when she wakes she will not
 think it long.

15 May 1849.

LOOKING FORWARD

SLEEP, let me sleep, for I am sick
 of care ;
 Sleep, let me sleep, for my pain
 wearies me.
 Shut out the light ; thicken the heavy
 air
 With drowsy incense ; let a distant
 stream
 Of music lull me, languid as a dream,
 Soft as the whisper of a summer
 sea.

Pluck me no rose that groweth on a
 thorn,
 Nor myrtle white and cold as snow
 in June,
 Fit for a virgin on her marriage
 morn :
 But bring me poppies brimmed with
 sleepy death,
 And ivy choking what it garlandeth,
 And primroses that open to the
 moon.

Listen, the music swells into a song,
 A simple song I loved in days of
 yore ;
 The echoes take it up and up along
 The hills, and the wind blows it
 back again.—
 Peace, peace, there is a memory in
 that strain
 Of happy days that shall return
 no more.

Oh peace! your music wakeneth
 old thought,
 But not old hope that made my
 life so sweet,
 Only the longing that must end in
 nought.
 Have patience with me, friends, a
 little while :
 For soon, where you shall dance and
 sing and smile,
 My quickened dust may blossom
 at your feet.

Sweet thought that I may yet live
 and grow green,
 That leaves may yet spring from
 the withered root,
 And buds and flowers and berries
 half unseen.
 Then, if you haply muse upon the
 past,
 Say this: Poor child, she has her
 wish at last ;
 Barren through life, but in death
 bearing fruit.

8 June 1849.

LIFE HIDDEN

ROSES and lilies grow above the
 place
 Where she sleeps the long sleep
 that doth not dream.
 If we could look upon her hidden face,
 Nor shadow would be there, nor
 garish gleam
 Of light ; her life is lapsing like
 a stream
 That makes no noise but floweth on
 apace
 Seawards, while many a shade
 and shady beam
 Vary the ripples in their gliding
 chase.

She doth not see, but knows ; she
 doth not feel,
 And yet is sensible ; she hears no
 sound,
 Yet counts the flight of time
 and doth not err.
 Peace far and near, peace to
 ourselves and her :
 Her body is at peace in holy
 ground,
 Her spirit is at peace where Angels
 kneel.

23 July 1849.

REMEMBER

REMEMBER me when I am gone
 away,
 Gone far away into the silent land ;
 When you can no more hold me
 by the hand,
 Nor I half turn to go yet turning
 stay.
 Remember me when no more day
 by day
 You tell me of our future that you
 plann'd :
 Only remember me ; you under-
 stand
 It will be late to counsel then or
 pray.
 Yet if you should forget me for a
 while
 And afterwards remember, do not
 grieve :
 For if the darkness and corruption
 leave
 A vestige of the thoughts that
 once I had,
 Better by far you should forget and
 smile
 Than that you should remember
 and be sad.

25 July 1849.

SOUND SLEEP

SOME are laughing, some are weeping ;

She is sleeping, only sleeping.

Round her rest wild flowers are creeping ;

There the wind is heaping, heaping
Sweetest sweets of Summer's keeping,

By the corn-fields ripe for reaping.

There are lilies, and there blushes
The deep rose, and there the thrushes

Sing till latest sunlight flushes

In the west ; a fresh wind brushes
Through the leaves while evening hushes.

There by day the lark is singing
And the grass and weeds are springing ;

There by night the bat is winging ;
There for ever winds are bringing
Far-off chimes of church-bells ringing.

Night and morning, noon and even,
Their sound fills her dreams with Heaven :

The long strife at length is striven :
Till her grave-bands shall be riven,
Such is the good portion given
To her soul at rest and shriven.

13 August 1849.

QUEEN ROSE

THE jessamine shows like a star ;
The lilies sway like sceptres slim ;
Fair clematis from near and far
Sets forth its wayward tangled whim ;

Curved meadowsweet blooms rich
and dim ;—

But yet a rose is fairer far.

The jessamine is odorous ; so
Maid-lilies are, and clematis ;
And where tall meadowsweet-flowers
grow

A rare and subtle perfume is ;—
What can there be more choice
than these ?—

A rose when it doth bud and blow.

Let others choose sweet jessamine,
Or weave their lily-crown aright,
And let who love it pluck and twine
Loose clematis, or draw delight
From meadowsweets' cluster
downy white—

The rose, the perfect rose, be mine.

16 August 1849.

HOW ONE CHOSE

'BEYOND the sea, in a green land
Where only rivers are—
Beyond the clouds, in the clear sky
Close by some quiet star—
Could you not fancy there might be
A home, Beloved, for you and me ?'

'If there were such a home, my
Friend,
Truly prepared for us,
Full of palm-branches, or of crowns
Sun-gemmed and glorious,
How should we reach it ? Let us
cease
From longing ; let us be at peace.'

'The nightingale sang yestereve ;
A sweet song singeth she,
Most sad and without any hope,
And full of memory ;

But still methought it seemed to
speak

To me of home, and bid me seek.'

'The nightingale ceased ere the
morn :

Her heart could not contain
The passion of her song, but burst
With the long throbbing pain.
Now she hath rest which is the best,
And now I too would be at rest.'

'Last night I watched the mounting
moon :

Her glory was too pale
To shine through the black heavy
clouds

That wrapt her like a veil ;
And yet with patience she passed
through
The mists, and reached the depths
of blue.'

'And when the road was travelled
o'er

And when the goal was won,
A little while and all her light
Was swallowed by the sun :
The weary moon must seek again,—
Even so our search would be in vain.'

'Yet seek with me. And if our way
Be long and troublesome,
And if our noon be hot until
The chilly shadows come
Of evening,—till those shadows flee
In dawn, think, Love, it is with me.'

'Nay, seek alone : I am no mate
For such as you, in truth :
My heart is old before its time ;
Yours yet is in its youth :
This home with pleasures girt about
Seek you, for I am wearied out.'

6 October 1849.

SEEKING REST

My Mother said : 'The child is
changed

That used to be so still ;
All the day long she sings and sings,
And seems to think no ill ;
She laughs as if some inward joy
Her heart would overfill.'

My Sisters said : 'Now prythee tell
Thy secret unto us :
Let us rejoice with thee ; for all
Is surely prosperous,
Thou art so merry : tell us, Sweet :
We had not used thee thus.'

My Mother says : 'What ails the
child
Lately so blythe of cheer ?
Art sick or sorry ? Nay, it is
The winter of the year ;
Wait till the Springtime comes
again,
And the sweet flowers appear.'

My Sisters say : 'Come, sit with us,
That we may weep with thee :
Show us thy grief that we may
grieve :
Yea haply, if we see
Thy sorrow, we may ease it ; but
Shall share it certainly.'

How should I share my pain, who
kept
My pleasure all my own ?
My Spring will never come again ;
My pretty flowers have blown
For the last time ; I can but sit
And think and weep alone.

10 October 1849.

ENDURANCE

YES, I too could face death and
never shrink.

But it is harder to bear hated
life ;

To strive with hands and knees
weary of strife ;

To drag the heavy chain whose
every link

Galls to the bone ; to stand upon
the brink

Of the deep grave, nor drowse
tho' it be rife

With sleep ; to hold with steady
hand the knife

Nor strike home :—this is courage,
as I think,

Surely to suffer is more than to
do.

To do is quickly done : to suffer is
Longer and fuller of heart-
sicknesses.

Each day's experience testifies of
this.

Good deeds are many, but good
lives are few :

Thousands taste the full cup ;
who drains the lees ?

Circa 1850.

WITHERING

FADE, tender lily,

Fade, O crimson rose,

Fade every flower,

Sweetest flower that blows.

Go, chilly autumn,

Come, O winter cold ;

Let the green stalks die away

Into common mould.

Birth follows hard on death,

Life on withering :

Hasten, we will come the sooner

Back to pleasant spring.

Circa 1850.

TWILIGHT CALM

OH pleasant eventide !

Clouds on the western side

Grow grey and greyer, hiding the
warm sun :

The bees and birds, their happy
labours done,

Seek their close nests and bide.

Screened in the leafy wood

The stock-doves sit and brood :

The very squirrel leaps from bough
to bough

But lazily ; pauses ; and settles now
Where once he stored his food.

One by one the flowers close,

Lily and dewy rose

Shutting their tender petals from the
moon :

The grasshoppers are still ; but not
so soon

Are still the noisy crows.

The dormouse squats and eats

Choice little dainty bits

Beneath the spreading roots of a
broad lime ;

Nibbling his fill he stops from time
to time

And listens where he sits.

From far the lowings come

Of cattle driven home :

From farther still the wind brings
fitfully

The vast continual murmur of the
sea,
Now loud, now almost dumb.

The gnats whirl in the air,
The evening gnats ; and there
The owl opes broad his eyes and
wings to sail
For prey ; the bat wakes ; and the
shell-less snail
Comes forth, clammy and bare.

Hark ! that's the nightingale,
Telling the self-same tale
Her song told when this ancient
earth was young :
So echoes answered when her song
was sung
In the first wooded vale.

We call it love and pain,
The passion of her strain ;
And yet we little understand or
know :
Why should it not be rather joy that
so
Throbs in each throbbing vein ?

In separate herds the deer
Lie ; here the bucks, and here
The does, and by its mother sleeps
the fawn :
Through all the hours of night until
the dawn
They sleep, forgetting fear.

The hare sleeps where it lies,
With wary half-closed eyes ;
The cock has ceased to crow, the
hen to cluck :
Only the fox is out, some heedless
duck
Or chicken to surprise.

Remote, each single star
Comes out, till there they are
All shining brightly. How the dew
falls damp !

While close at hand the glow-worm
lights her lamp,
Or twinkles from afar.

But evening now is done
As much as if the sun
Day-giving had arisen in the East—
For night has come ; and the great
calm has ceased,
The quiet sands have run.

7 February 1850.

TWO THOUGHTS OF DEATH

I

HER heart that loved me once is
rottenness
Now and corruption ; and her
life is dead
That was to have been one with
mine, she said.
The earth must lie with such a cruel
stress
On eyes whereon the white lids
used to press ;
Foul worms fill up her mouth so
sweet and red ;
Foul worms are underneath her
graceful head ;
Yet these, being born of her from
nothingness,
These worms are certainly flesh of
her flesh.—
How is it that the grass is rank
and green
And the dew-dropping rose is brave
and fresh
Above what was so sweeter far than
they ?

Even as her beauty hath passed
quite away,
Theirs too shall be as though it
had not been.

2

So I said underneath the dusky
trees :
But, because still I loved her
memory,
I stooped to pluck a pale anemone,
And lo my hand lighted upon
heartsease
Not fully blown : while with new
life from these
Fluttered a starry moth that
rapidly
Rose toward the sun : sunlighted
flashed on me
Its wings that seemed to throb like
heart-pulses.
Far far away it flew, far out of
sight,—
From earth and flowers of earth
it passed away
As though it flew straight up into
the light.
Then my heart answered me :
Thou fool, to say
That she is dead whose night is
turned to day,
And no more shall her day turn
back to night.

16 March 1850.

THREE MOMENTS

THE Child said : 'Pretty bird,
Come back and play with me.'
The Bird said : 'It is in vain,
For I am free.
I am free, I will not stay,
But will fly far away,

In the woods to sing and play,
Far away, far away.'
The Child sought her Mother :
'I have lost my bird,' said she,
Weeping bitterly.
But the Mother made her answer,
Half sighing pityingly,
Half smiling cheerily :
'Though thy bird come nevermore,
Do not weep ;
Find another playfellow,
Child, and keep
Tears for future pain more deep.'

'Sweet rose, do not wither,'
The Girl said.
But a blight had touched its heart
And it drooped its crimson head.
In the morning it had opened
Full of life and bloom,
But the leaves fell one by one
Till the twilight gloom.
One by one the leaves fell
By summer winds blown from their
stem ;
They fell upon the dewy earth
Which nourished once now tainted
them.

Again the young Girl wept
And sought her Mother's ear :
'My rose is dead so full of grace,
The very rose I meant to place
In the wreath that I wear.'
'Nay, never weep for such as this,'
The Mother answered her :
'But weave another crown, less fair
Perhaps, but fitter for thy hair.
And keep thy tears,' the Mother
said,
'For something heavier.'

The Woman knelt, but did not
pray
Nor weep nor cry ; she only said,

'Not this, not this!' and clasped
her hands
Against her heart, and bowed her
head,
While the great struggle shook the
bed.

'Not this, not this!' tears did not
fall;

'Not this!' it was all
She could say; no sobs would come;
The mortal grief was almost dumb.—
At length when it was over, when
She knew it was and would be so,
She cried: 'O Mother, where are
they,

The tears that used to flow
So easily? One single drop
Might save my reason now, or stop
My heart from breaking. Blessed
tears

Wasted in former years!'—
Then the grave Mother made reply:
'O Daughter mine, be of good cheer,
Rejoicing thou canst shed no tear.
Thy pain is almost over now.
Once more thy heart shall throb

with pain,
But then shall never throb again.
Oh happy thou who canst not weep,
Oh happy thou!'

23 March 1850.

IS AND WAS

SHE was whiter than the ermine
That half shadowed neck and
hand,
And her tresses were more golden
Than their golden band;
Snowy ostrich plumes she wore;
Yet I almost loved her more
In the simple time before.

Then she plucked the stately lilies,
Knowing not she was more fair,
And she listened to the skylark
In the morning air.

Then, a kerchief all her crown,
She looked for the acorns brown,
Bent their bough, and shook them
down.

Then she thought of Christmas holly
And of Maybloom in sweet May;
Then she loved to pick the cherries
And to turn the hay.

She was humble then and meek,
And the blush upon her cheek
Told of much she could not speak.

Now she is a noble lady
With calm voice not over loud;
Very courteous in her action,

Yet you think her proud;
Much too haughty to affect;
Too indifferent to direct
Or be angry or suspect;
Doing all from self-respect.

Spring 1850.

SONG

WE buried her among the flowers
At falling of the leaf,
And choked back all our tears; her
joy
Could never be our grief.

She lies among the living flowers
And grass, the only thing
That perishes;—or is it that
Our Autumn was her Spring?

Doubtless, if we could see her face,
The smile is settled there
Which almost broke our hearts when
last
We knelt by her in prayer;

When, with tired eyes and failing
breath

And hands crossed on her breast,
Perhaps she saw her Guardian spread
His wings above her rest.

So she sleeps hidden in the flowers ;
But yet a little while,
And we shall see her wake and rise,
Fair, with the self-same smile.

14 May 1850.

ANNIE

ANNIE is fairer than her kith
And kinder than her kin :
Her eyes are like the open heaven
Holy and pure from sin :
Her heart is like an ordered house
Good fairies harbour in :
Oh happy he who wins the love
That I can never win !

Her sisters stand as hyacinths
Around the perfect rose :
They bloom and open to the full,
My bud will scarce uncloze.
They are for every butterfly
That comes and sips and goes :
My bud hides in the tender green
Most sweet and hardly shows.

Oh cruel kindness in soft eyes
That are no more than kind,
On which I gaze my heart away
Till the tears make me blind !
How is it others find the way
That I can never find
To make her laugh that sweetest
laugh
Which leaves all else behind ?

Her hair is like the golden corn
A low wind breathes upon :

Or like the golden harvest-moon
When all the mists are gone :
Or like a stream with golden sands
On which the sun has shone
Day after day in summertime
Ere autumn leaves are wan.

I will not tell her that I love,
Lest she should turn away
With sorrow in her tender heart
Which now is light and gay.
I will not tell her that I love,
Lest she should turn and say
That we must meet no more again
For many a weary day.

26 September 1850.

A DIRGE

SHE was as sweet as violets in the
Spring,
As fair as any rose in Summertime :
But frail are roses in their prime
And violets in their blossoming.
Even so was she :
And now she lies,
The earth upon her fast-closed
eyes,
Dead in the darkness silently.

The sweet Spring violets never bud
again,
The roses bloom and perish in a
morn :
They see no second quickening lying
lorn :
Their beauty dies as though in
vain.
Must she die so
For evermore,
Cold as the sand upon the shore,
As passionless for joy and woe?—

Nay she is worth much more than
 flowers that fade,
 And yet shall be made fair with
 purple fruit :
 Branch of the Living Vine, whose
 Root
 From all eternity is laid.
 Another Sun
 Than this of ours
 Has withered up indeed her
 flowers
 But ripened her grapes every one.
18 January 1851.

A SUMMER WISH

LIVE all thy sweet life through,
 Sweet Rose, dew-sprent,
 Drop down thine evening dew,
 To gather it anew
 When day is bright :
 I fancy thou wast meant
 Chiefly to give delight.

Sing in the silent sky,
 Glad soaring bird ;
 Sing out thy notes on high
 To sunbeam straying by
 Or passing cloud ;
 Heedless if thou art heard,
 Sing thy full song aloud.

Oh that it were with me
 As with the flower !
 Blooming on its own tree
 For butterfly and bee
 Its summer morns :
 That I might bloom mine hour,
 A rose in spite of thorns.

Oh that my work were done
 As birds' that soar
 Rejoicing in the sun :

That when my time is run
 And daylight too,
 I so might rest once more
 Cool with refreshing dew.
21 June 1851.

SONG

IT is not for her even brow
 And shining yellow hair,
 But it is for her tender eyes
 I think my love so fair :
 Her tell-tale eyes that smile and
 weep
 As frankly as they wake and sleep.

It is not for her rounded cheek
 I love and fain would win,
 But it is for the blush that comes
 Straight from the heart within :
 The honest blush of maiden shame
 That blushes without thought of
 blame.

So in my dreams I never hear
 Her song, although she sings
 As if a choir of spirits swept
 From earth with throbbing
 wings :
 I only hear the simple voice
 Whose love makes many hearts
 rejoice.
1851.

A FAIR WORLD THOUGH A FALLEN

YOU tell me that the world is fair,
 in spite
 Of the old Fall ; and that I
 should not turn
 So to the grave, and let my spirit
 yearn

After the quiet of the long last
night.

Have I then shut mine eyes against
the light,

Grief-deafened lest my spirit
should discern?

Yet how could I keep silence
when I burn?

And who can give me comfort?—
Hear the right.

Have patience with the weak and
sick at heart:

Bind up the wounded with a
tender touch,

Comfort the sad, tear-blinded
as they go:—

For, though I failed to choose the
better part,

Were it a less unutterable woe

If we should come to love this
world too much?

30 August 1851.

BOOKS IN THE RUNNING BROOKS

'It is enough, enough,' one said,
At play among the flowers:

'I spy a rose upon the thorn,
A rainbow in the showers;

I hear a merry chime of bells
Ring out the passing hours.'

Soft springs the fountain

From the daisied ground,

Softly falling on the moss

Without a sound.

'It is enough,' she said, and fixed
Calm eyes upon the sky:

'I watch a flitting tender cloud
Just like a dove go by;

A lark is rising from the grass,

A wren is building nigh.'

Softly the fountain

Threads its silver way,

Screened by the scented bloom

Of whitest May.

'Enough?' she whispered to her-
self,

As doubting: 'Is it so?

Enough to wear the roses fair,

Oh sweetest flowers that blow?

Oh yes, it surely is enough—

My happy home below!'

A shadow stretcheth

From the hither shore:

The waters darken

More and more and more.

'It is enough,' she says; but with
A listless weary moan:

'Enough,' if mixing with her
friends:

'Enough,' if left alone;

But to herself: 'Not yet enough

This suffering, to atone?'

The cold black waters

Seem to stagnate there,

Without a single wave

Or breath of air.

And now she says: 'It is enough,'

Half languid and half stirred:

'Enough,' to silence and to
sound,

Thorn, blossom, soaring bird:

'Enough,' she says; but with a
lack

Of something in the word.

Defiled and turbid

See the waters pass,

Half light, half shadow,

Struggling through the grass.

Ah will it ever dawn, that day

When, calm for good or ill,

Her heart shall say : ' It is enough,
 For Thou art with me still ;
 It is enough, O Lord my God,
 Thine only blessed Will ' ?
 Then shall the fountain sing
 And flow to rest,
 Clear as the sun-track
 To the purple West.

26 August 1852.

THE SUMMER IS ENDED

WREATHE no more lilies in my
 hair,
 For I am dying, Sister sweet :
 Or, if you will for the last time
 Indeed, why make me fair
 Once for my winding-sheet.

Pluck no more roses for my breast,
 For I like them fade in my prime :
 Or, if you will, why pluck them
 still,
 That they may share my rest
 Once more for the last time.

Weep not for me when I am gone,
 Dear tender one, but hope and
 smile :
 Or, if you cannot choose but weep,
 A little while weep on,
 Only a little while.

11 September 1852.

AFTER ALL

' I THOUGHT your search was over.'
 — ' So I thought.'
 ' But you are seeking still.' — ' Yes,
 even so :
 Still seeking in mine own despite
 below

That which in heaven alone is found
 unsought :

Still spending for that thing which is
 not bought.'

' Then chase no more this shifting
 empty show.' —

' Amen : so bid a drowning man
 forego

The straw he clutches : will he so
 be taught ?

You have a home where peace broods
 like a dove,

Screened from the weary world's
 loud discontent :

You have home here : you wait for
 home above.

I must unlearn the pleasant ways
 I went :

Must learn another hope, another
 love,

And sigh indeed for home in
 banishment.'

24 October 1852.

FROM THE ANTIQUE

THE wind shall lull us yet,
 The flowers shall spring above
 us :

And those who hate forget,
 And those forget who love us.

The pulse of hope shall cease,
 Of joy and of regretting :
 We twain shall sleep in peace,
 Forgotten and forgetting.

For us no sun shall rise,
 Nor wind rejoice, nor river,
 Where we with fast-closed eyes
 Shall sleep and sleep for ever.

10 December 1852.

TO WHAT PURPOSE IS THIS
WASTE ?

A WINDY shell singing upon the
shore :

A lily budding in a desert place,
 Blooming alone
 With no companion

To praise its perfect perfume and
its grace :

A rose crimson and blushing at the
core,

Hedged-in with thorns behind it and
before :

A fountain in the grass,
Whose shadowy waters pass
Only to nourish birds and furnish
food

For squirrels of the wood :
An oak deep in the forest's heart,
the house

Of black-eyed tiny mouse :
Its strong roots, fit for fuel, roofing
in

The hoarded nuts, acorns, and
grains of wheat—

Shutting them from the wind and
scorching heat,
And sheltering them when the rains
begin :

A precious pearl deep-buried in the
sea

Where none save fishes be :
The fullest merriest note

For which the skylark strains his
silver throat,

Heard only in the sky
By other birds that fitfully

Chase one another as they fly :
The ripest plum down-tumbled to
the ground

By southern winds most musical of
sound,

But by no thirsty traveller found :
Honey of wild bees in their ordered
cells

Stored, not for human mouths to
taste :—

I said smiling superior down : What
waste

Of good, where no man dwells !

This I said on a pleasant day in June
Before the sun had set, though a
white moon

Already flaked the quiet blue
Which not a star looked through.

But still the air was warm, and
drowsily

It blew into my face :
So, since that same day I had
wandered deep

Into the country, I sought out a
place

For rest beneath a tree,
And very soon forgot myself in sleep :
Not so mine own words had forgotten
me.

Mine eyes were open to behold
All hidden things,

And mine ears heard all secret
whisperings :

So my proud tongue, that had
been bold

To carp and to reprove,
Was silenced by the force of utter
Love.

All voices of all things inanimate
Join with the song of Angels and
the song

Of blessed spirits, chiming with
Their Hallelujahs. One wind wak-
eneth

Across the sleeping sea, crisping
along

The waves, and brushes through the
great
Forests and tangled hedges, and
calls out

Of rivers a clear sound,
And makes the ripe corn rustle on
the ground,
And murmurs in a shell :
Till all their voices swell
Above the clouds in one loud hymn
Joining the song of Seraphim,
Or like pure incense circle round
about
The walls of heaven, or like a well-
spring rise
In shady Paradise.

A lily blossoming unseen
Holds honey in its silver cup
Whereon a bee may sup,
Till being full she takes the rest
And stores it in her waxen nest :
While the fair blossom lifted up
On its one stately stem of green
Is type of her the Undeiled,
Arrayed in white, whose eyes are
mild
As a white dove's, whose garment is
Blood-cleansed from all impurities
And earthly taints,
Her robe the righteousness of
Saints.

And other eyes than ours
Were made to look on flowers,
Eyes of small birds and insects
small :

The deep sun-blushing rose
Round which the prickles close
Opens her bosom to them all.
The tiniest living thing
That soars on feathered wing,
Or crawls among the long grass out
of sight,

Has just as good a right
To its appointed portion of delight
As any King.

Why should we grudge a hidden
water-stream
To birds and squirrels while we have
enough ?
As if a nightingale should cease to
sing
Lest we should hear, or finch leafed
out of sight
Warbling its fill in summer light :
As if sweet violets in the Spring
Should cease to blow, for fear our
path should seem
Less weary or less rough.

So every oak that stands a house
For skilful mouse
And year by year renews its
strength,
Shakes acorns from a hundred
boughs
Which shall be oaks at length.

Who hath weighed the waters and
shall say
What is hidden in the depths from
day ?

Pearls and precious stones and
golden sands,

Wondrous weeds and blossoms
rare,

Kept back from human hands,
But good and fair,

A silent praise as pain is silent
prayer.

A hymn and incense rising toward
the skies,

As our whole life should rise :
An offering without stint from earth
below,
Which Love accepteth so.

Thus is it with a warbling bird
 With fruit bloom-ripe and full of
 seed,
 With honey which the wild bees
 draw
 From flowers, and store for future
 need
 By a perpetual law.
 We want the faith that hath not
 seen
 Indeed, but hath believed His
 truth
 Who witnessed that His work was
 good :
 So we pass cold to age from youth.
 Alas for us, for we have heard
 And known, but have not under-
 stood !

O earth, earth, earth, thou yet shalt
 bow

Who art so fair and lifted up,
 Thou yet shalt drain the bitter cup.
 Men's eyes that wait upon thee
 now,
 All eyes shall see thee lost and
 mean,
 Exposed and valued at thy worth,
 While thou shalt stand ashamed
 and dumb.—

Ah when the Son of Man shall
 come,

Shall He find faith upon the earth?

22 January 1853.

NEXT OF KIN

THE shadows gather round me,
 while you are in the sun :
 My day is almost ended, but yours
 is just begun :
 The winds are singing to us both and
 the streams are singing still,

And they fill your heart with music,
 but mine they cannot fill.

Your home is built in sunlight,
 mine in another day :

Your home is close at hand, sweet
 friend, but mine is far away :

Your bark is in the haven where
 you fain would be :

I must launch out into the deep,
 across the unknown sea.

You, white as dove or lily or spirit
 of the light :

I, stained and cold and glad to hide
 in the cold dark night :

You, joy to many a loving heart and
 light to many eyes :

I, lonely in the knowledge earth is
 full of vanities.

Yet when your day is over, as mine
 is nearly done,

And when your race is finished,
 as mine is almost run,

You, like me, shall cross your hands
 and bow your graceful head :

Yea, we twain shall sleep together in
 an equal bed.

21 February 1853.

FOR ROSALINE'S ALBUM

Do you hear the low winds singing,
 And streams singing on their
 bed ?—

Very distant bells are ringing
 In a chapel for the dead :—
 Death-pale better than life-red.

Mother, come to me in rest,
 And bring little May to see.
 Shall I bid no other guest ?

Seven slow nights have passed away
Over my forgotten clay :

None must come save you and
she.

February 1853.

WHAT?

STRENGTHENING as secret manna,
Fostering as clouds above,
Kind as a hovering dove,
Full as a plenteous river,
Our glory and our banner
For ever and for ever.

Dear as a dying cadence
Of music in the drowsy night :
Fair as the flowers which maidens
Pluck for an hour's delight,
And then forget them quite.

Gay as a cowslip-meadow
Fresh opening to the sun
When new day is begun :
Soft as a sunny shadow
When day is almost done.

Glorious as purple twilight,
Pleasant as budding tree,
Untouched as any islet
Shrined in an unknown sea :
Sweet as a fragrant rose amid the
dew :—
As sweet, as fruitless too.

A bitter dream to wake from,
But oh how pleasant while we
dream !
A poisoned fount to take from,
But oh how sweet the stream !
May 1853.

A PAUSE

THEY made the chamber sweet with
flowers and leaves,
And the bed sweet with flowers on
which I lay ;
While my soul, love-bound, loitered
on its way.

I did not hear the birds about the
eaves,
Nor hear the reapers talk among
the sheaves :
Only my soul kept watch from
day to day,
My thirsty soul kept watch for one
away :—

Perhaps he loves, I thought, re-
members, grieves.
At length there came the step upon
the stair,
Upon the lock the old familiar
hand :

Then first my spirit seemed to scent
the air
Of Paradise ; then first the tardy
sand
Of time ran golden ; and I felt my
hair

Put on a glory, and my soul
expand.

10 June 1853.

THREE SEASONS

'A CUP for hope !' she said,
In springtime ere the bloom was old ;
The crimson wine was poor and cold
By her mouth's richer red.

'A cup for love !' how low,
How soft the words ; and all the while
Her blush was rippling with a smile
Like summer after snow.

'A cup for memory!'

Cold cup that one must drain alone :
While autumn winds are up and moan
Across the barren sea.

Hope, memory, love :
Hope for fair morn, and love for day,
And memory for the evening grey
And solitary dove.

18 June 1853.

HOLY INNOCENTS

SLEEP, little Baby, sleep ;
The holy Angels love thee,
And guard thy bed, and keep
A blessed watch above thee.
No spirit can come near
Nor evil beast to harm thee :
Sleep, Sweet, devoid of fear
Where nothing need alarm thee.

The Love which doth not sleep,
The eternal Arms surround thee :
The Shepherd of the sheep
In perfect love hath found thee.
Sleep through the holy night,
Christ-kept from snare and sorrow,
Until thou wake to light
And love and warmth to-morrow.
1 July 1853.

SEASONS

IN Springtime when the leaves are
young,
Clear dewdrops gleam like jewels,
hung
On boughs the fair birds roost
among.

When Summer comes with sweet
unrest,
Birds weary of their mother's breast,
And look abroad and leave the nest.

In Autumn ere the waters freeze,
The swallows fly across the seas :—
If we could fly away with these !

In Winter when the birds are gone,
The sun himself looks starved and
wan,

And starved the snow he shines upon.

September 1853.

BURIED

THOU sleepest where the lilies fade,
Thou dwellest where the lilies fade
not :

Sweet, when thine earthly part de-
cayed

Thy heavenly part decayed not.

Thou dwellest where the roses blow,
The crimson roses bud and
blossom :

While on thine eyes is heaped the
snow—

The snow upon thy bosom.

1853.

A WISH

I WISH I were a little bird
That out of sight doth soar ;
I wish I were a song once heard
But often pondered o'er,
Or shadow of a lily stirred
By wind upon the floor,
Or echo of a loving word
Worth all that went before,
Or memory of a hope deferred
That springs again no more.

1853.

TWO PARTED

'SING of a love lost and forgotten,
Sing of a joy finished and o'er,

Sing of a heart core-cold and rotten,
Sing of a hope springing no more.'
'Sigh for a heart aching and sore.'

'I was most true and my own love
betrayed me,
I was most true and she would
none of me.

Was it the cry of the world that
dismayed thee?

Love, I had bearded the wide
world for thee.'

'Hark to the sorrowful sound of
the sea.'

'Still in my dreams she comes tender
and gracious,
Still in my dreams love looks out
of her eyes:

Oh that the love of a dream were
veracious,

Or that thus dreaming I might
not arise!'

'Oh for the silence that stilleth
all sighs!'

1853.

AUTUMN

CARE flieth,
Hope and Fear together:
Love dieth
In the Autumn weather.

For a friend
Even Care is pleasant:
When Fear doth end
Hope is no more present:
Autumn silences the turtle-dove:—
In blank Autumn who could speak
of love?

1853.

SEASONS

CROCUSES and snowdrops wither,
Violets, primroses together,
Fading with the fading Spring
Before a fuller blossoming.

O sweet Summer, pass not soon,
Stay awhile the harvest-moon:
O sweetest Summer, do not go,
For Autumn's next and next the
snow.

When Autumn comes the days are
drear,

It is the downfall of the year:
We heed the wind and falling leaf
More than the golden harvest-sheaf.

Dreary Winter come at last:
Come quickly, so be quickly past:
Dusk and sluggish Winter, wane
Till Spring and sunlight dawn again.

7 December 1853.

BALLAD

'SOFT white lamb in the daisy
meadow,

Come hither and play with me,
For I am lonesome and I am tired
Underneath the apple tree.'

'There's your husband if you are
lonesome, lady,
And your bed if you want for rest:
And your baby for a playfellow
With a soft hand for your breast.'

'Fair white dove in the sunshine,
Perched on the ashen bough,
Come and perch by me and coo to
me
While the buds are blowing now.

'I must keep my nestlings warm,
lady,
Underneath my downy breast :
There's your baby to coo and crow
to you
While I brood upon my nest.'

'Faint white rose, come lie on my
heart,
Come lie there with your thorn :
For I'll be dead at the vesper-bell
And buried the morrow morn.'

'There's blood on your lily breast,
lady,
Like roses when they blow,
And there's blood upon your little
hand
That should be white as snow :
I will stay amid my fellows
Where the lilies grow.'

'But it's oh my own own little babe
That I had you here to kiss,
And to comfort me in the strange
next world
Though I slighted you so in this.'

'You shall kiss both cheek and chin,
mother,
And kiss me between the eyes,
Or ever the moon is on her way
And the pleasant stars arise :
You shall kiss and kiss your fill,
mother,
In the nest of Paradise.'

7 January 1854.

A SOUL

SHE stands as pale as Parian statues
stand ;
Like Cleopatra when she turned
at bay,

And felt her strength above the
Roman sway,
And felt the aspic writhing in her
hand.
Her face is steadfast toward the
shadowy land,
For dim beyond it looms the land
of day :
Her feet are steadfast, all the
arduous way
That foot-track doth not waver on
the sand.
She stands there like a beacon
through the night,
A pale clear beacon where the
storm-drift is—
She stands alone, a wonder deathly-
white :
She stands there patient nerved with
inner might,
Indomitable in her feebleness,
Her face and will athirst against the
light.

7 February 1854.

THE BOURNE

UNDERNEATH the growing grass,
Underneath the living flowers,
Deeper than the sound of showers :
There we shall not count the
hours
By the shadows as they pass.

Youth and health will be but vain,
Beauty reckoned of no worth :
There a very little girth
Can hold round what once the
earth
Seemed too narrow to contain.

17 February 1854.

DREAM-LOVE

YOUNG Love lies sleeping
 In May-time of the year,
 Among the lilies,
 Lapped in the tender light :
 White lambs come grazing,
 White doves come building there ;
 And round about him
 The May-bushes are white.

Soft moss the pillow
 For oh a softer cheek ;
 Broad leaves cast shadow
 Upon the heavy eyes :
 There winds and waters
 Grow lulled and scarcely speak ;
 There twilight lingers
 The longest in the skies.

Young Love lies dreaming ;
 But who shall tell the dream ?
 A perfect sunlight
 On rustling forest tips ;
 Or perfect moonlight
 Upon a rippling stream ;
 Or perfect silence,
 Or song of cherished lips.

Burn odours round him
 To fill the drowsy air ;
 Weave silent dances
 Around him to and fro ;
 For oh in waking
 The sights are not so fair,
 And song and silence
 Are not like these below.

Young Love lies dreaming
 Till summer days are gone,—
 Dreaming and drowsing
 Away to perfect sleep :
 He sees the beauty
 Sun hath not looked upon,

And tastes the fountain
 Unutterably deep.

Him perfect music
 Doth hush unto his rest,
 And through the pauses
 The perfect silence calms :
 Oh poor the voices
 Of earth from east to west,
 And poor earth's stillness
 Between her stately palms !

Young Love lies drowsing
 Away to popped death ;
 Cool shadows deepen
 Across the sleeping face :
 So fails the summer
 With warm delicious breath ;
 And what hath autumn
 To give us in its place ?

Draw close the curtains
 Of branchèd evergreen ;
 Change cannot touch them
 With fading fingers sere :
 Here the first violets
 Perhaps will bud unseen,
 And a dove, may be,
 Return to nestle here.

19 May 1854.

FROM THE ANTIQUE

It's a weary life, it is, she said :—
 Doubly blank in a woman's lot :
 I wish and I wish I were a man :
 Or, better than any being, were
 not :

Were nothing at all in all the world,
 Not a body and not a soul :
 Not so much as a grain of dust
 Or drop of water from pole to pole.

Still the world would wag on the
same,
Still the seasons go and come :
Blossoms bloom as in days of old,
Cherries ripen and wild bees hum.

None would miss me in all the
world,
How much less would care or
weep :
I should be nothing, while all the rest
Would wake and weary and fall
asleep.

28 June 1854.

LONG LOOKED FOR

WHEN the eye hardly sees,
And the pulse hardly stirs,
And the heart would scarcely quicken
Though the voice were hers :
Then the longing wasting fever
Will be almost past :
Sleep indeed come back again,
And peace at last.

Not till then, dear friends,
Not till then, most like, most dear,
The dove will fold its wings
To settle here.
Then to all her coldness
I also shall be cold ;
Then I also have forgotten
Our happy love of old.

Close mine eyes with care,
Cross my hands upon my breast,
Let shadows and full silence
Tell of rest :
For she yet may look upon me,
Too proud to speak, but know
One heart less loves her in the world
Than loved her long ago.

Strew flowers upon the bed
And flowers upon the floor,
Let all be sweet and comely
When she stands at the door :
Fair as a bridal chamber
For her to come into,
When the sunny day is over
At falling of the dew.

If she comes, watch her not,
But careless turn aside :
She may weep if left alone
With her beauty and her pride :
She may pluck a leaf perhaps
Or a languid violet
When life and love are finished
And even I forget.

12 August 1854.

LISTENING

SHE listened like a cushat dove
That listens to its mate alone :
She listened like a cushat dove
That loves but only one.

Not fair as men would reckon fair,
Nor noble as they count the line :
Only as graceful as a bough,
And tendrils of the vine :
Only as noble as sweet Eve
Your ancestress and mine.

And downcast were her dovelike eyes
And downcast was her tender cheek ;
Her pulses fluttered like a dove
To hear him speak.

October 1854.

DEAD BEFORE DEATH

AM changed and cold, how changed
and very cold,
With stiffened smiling lips and
cold calm eyes !

Changed, yet the same ; much
 knowing, little wise,—
This was the promise of the days of
 old !

Grown hard and stubborn in the
 ancient mould,
 Grown rigid in the sham of life-
 long lies :

We hoped for better things as
 years would rise,
 But it is over as a tale once told.

All fallen the blossom that no fruit-
 age bore,

All lost the present and the future
 time,
 All lost, all lost, the lapse that went
 before :

So lost till death shut-to the opened
 door,

So lost from chime to everlasting
 chime,

So cold and lost for ever evermore.

2 December 1854.

ECHO

COME to me in the silence of the
 night ;

Come in the speaking silence of
 a dream ;

Come with soft rounded cheeks and
 eyes as bright

As sunlight on a stream ;

Come back in tears,

O memory, hope, love of finished
 years.

O dream how sweet, too sweet, too
 bitter sweet,

Whose wakening should have
 been in Paradise,

Where souls brimfull of love abide
 and meet ;

Where thirsting longing eyes
 Watch the slow door
 That opening, letting in, lets out no
 more.

Yet come to me in dreams, that I
 may live

My very life again though cold
 in death :

Come back to me in dreams, that I
 may give

Pulse for pulse, breath for breath :

Speak low, lean low,

As long ago, my love, how long ago.

18 December 1854.

THE FIRST SPRING DAY

I WONDER if the sap is stirring yet,
 If wintry birds are dreaming of a
 mate,

If frozen snowdrops feel as yet the
 sun

And crocus fires are kindling one
 by one :

Sing, robin, sing ;

I still am sore in doubt concerning
 Spring.

I wonder if the Springtide of this year
 Will bring another Spring both lost
 and dear ;

If heart and spirit will find out their
 Spring,

Or if the world alone will bud and
 sing :

Sing, hope, to me ;

Sweet notes, my hope, soft notes for
 memory.

The sap will surely quicken soon or
 late,

The tardiest bird will twitter to a
 mate ;

So Spring must dawn again with
warmth and bloom,
Or in this world or in the world to
come :

Sing, voice of Spring,
Till I too blossom and rejoice and
sing.

1 March 1855.

MY DREAM

HEAR now a curious dream I dreamed
last night,
Each word whereof is weighed and
sifted truth.

I stood beside Euphrates while it
swelled

Like overflowing Jordan in its youth.
It waxed and coloured sensibly to
sight ;

Till out of myriad pregnant waves
there welled

Young crocodiles, a gaunt blunt-
featured crew,

Fresh-hatched perhaps and daubed
with birthday dew.

The rest if I should tell, I fear my
friend,

My closest friend, would deem the
facts untrue ;

And therefore it were wisely left
untold ;

Yet if you will, why, hear it to the
end.

Each crocodile was girt with massive
gold

And polished stones that with their
wearers grew :

But one there was who waxed be-
yond the rest,

Wore kinglier girdle and a kingly
crown,

Whilst crowns and orbs and sceptres
starred his breast.

All gleamed compact and green with
scale on scale,

But special burnishment adorned his
mail

And special terror weighed upon his
frown ;

His punier brethren quaked before
his tail,

Broad as a rafter, potent as a flail.

So he grew lord and master of his
kin :

But who shall tell the tale of all
their woes ?

An execrable appetite arose,

He batted on them, crunched, and
sucked them in.

He knew no law, he feared no
binding law,

But ground them with inexorable
jaw.

The luscious fat distilled upon his
chin,

Exuded from his nostrils and his
eyes,

While still like hungry death he fed
his maw ;

Till, every minor crocodile being
dead

And buried too, himself gorged to
the full,

He slept with breath oppressed and
unstrung claw.

Oh marvel passing strange which
next I saw !

In sleep he dwindled to the common
size,

And all the empire faded from his
coat.

Then from far off a wingèd vessel
came,

Swift as a swallow, subtle as a flame :

I know not what it bore of freight
 or host,
 But white it was as an avenging
 ghost.
 It levelled strong Euphrates in its
 course ;
 Supreme yet weightless as an idle
 mote
 It seemed to tame the waters without
 force
 Till not a murmur swelled or billow
 beat.
 Lo, as the purple shadow swept the
 sands,
 The prudent crocodile rose on his
 feet,
 And shed appropriate tears and
 wrung his hands.

What can it mean? you ask. I
 answer not
 For meaning, but myself must echo,
 What?
 And tell it as I saw it on the spot.
9 March 1855.

THE LAST LOOK

HER face was like an opening rose,
 So bright to look upon :
 But now it is like fallen snows,
 As cold, as dead, as wan.
 Heaven lit with stars is more like
 her
 Than is this empty crust :
 Deaf, dumb, and blind, it cannot stir,
 But crumbles back to dust.
 No flower be taken from her bed
 For me, no lock be shorn :
 I give her up, the early dead,
 The dead, the newly born.

If I remember her, no need
 Of formal tokens set ;
 Of hollow token-lies indeed
 No need, if I forget.

23 March 1855.

I HAVE A MESSAGE UNTO THEE

(WRITTEN IN SICKNESS)

GREEN sprout the grasses,
 Red blooms the mossy rose,
 Blue nods the harebell
 Where purple heather blows :
 The water-lily, silver white,
 Is living fair as light :

Sweet jasmine-branches trail
 A dusky starry veil :
 Each goodly is to see,
 Comely in its degree :
 I, only I, alas that this should be,
 Am ruinously pale.

New year renews the grasses,
 The crimson rose renews,
 Brings up the breezy bluebell,
 Refreshes heath with dews :
 Then water-lilies ever
 Bud fresh upon the river :
 Then jasmine lights its star
 And spreads its arms afar :
 I only in my spring
 Can neither bud nor sing :
 I find not honey but a sting
 Though fair the blossoms are.

For me no downy grasses,
 For me no blossoms pluck :
 But leave them for the breezes,
 For honey-bees to suck,
 For childish hands to pull
 And pile their baskets full.

I will not have a crown
 That soon must be laid down :
 Trust me : I cannot care
 A withering crown to wear,
 I who may be immortally made fair
 Where autumn turns not brown.

Spring, summer, autumn,
 Winter, all will pass,
 With tender blossoms
 And with fruitful grass.
 Sweet days of yore
 Will pass to come no more,
 Sweet perfumes fly,
 Buds languish and go by :
 O bloom that cannot last,
 O blossoms quite gone past,
 I yet shall feast when you shall fast,
 And live when you shall die.

Your work-day fully ended,
 Your pleasant task being done,
 You shall finish with the stars,
 The moon and setting sun.
 You and these and time
 Shall end with the last chime,—
 For earthly solace given,
 But needed not in heaven ;
 Needed not perhaps
 Through the eternal lapse.
 Or else, all signs fulfilled,
 What you foreshow may yield
 Delights through heaven's own
 harvest field
 With undecaying saps.

A blessing on the flowers
 That God has made so good,
 From crops of jealous gardens
 To wildlings of a wood.
 They show us symbols deep
 Of how to sow and reap :
 They teach us lessons plain
 Of patient harvest-gain.

They still are telling of
 God's unimagined love :—
 'Oh gift,' they say, 'all gifts above,
 Shall it be given in vain ?

'Better you had not seen us
 But shared the blind man's night,
 Better you had not scented
 Our incense of delight,
 Than only plucked to scorn
 The rosebud for its thorn :
 Not so the instinctive thrush
 Hymns in a holly-bush.
 Be wise betimes, and with the bee
 Suck sweets from prickly tree,
 To last when earth's are flown :
 So God well pleased will own
 Your work, and bless not time alone
 But ripe eternity.'

26 March 1855.

COBWEBS

IT is a land with neither night nor
 day,
 Nor heat nor cold, nor any wind
 nor rain,
 Nor hills nor valleys : but one
 even plain
 Stretches through long unbroken
 miles away,
 While through the sluggish air a
 twilight grey
 Broodeth : no moons or seasons
 wax and wane,
 No ebb and flow are there along
 the main,
 No bud-time, no leaf-falling, there
 for aye :—
 No ripple on the sea, no shifting
 sand,
 No beat of wings to stir the
 stagnant space :

No pulse of life through all the
loveless land
And loveless sea ; no trace of days
before,
No guarded home, no toil-won
resting-place,
No future hope, no fear for ever-
more.

October 1855.

MAY

I CANNOT tell you how it was ;
But this I know : it came to
pass—
Upon a bright and breezy day
When May was young, ah pleasant
May !
As yet the poppies were not born
Between the blades of tender corn ;
The last eggs had not hatched as
yet,
Nor any bird forgone its mate.

I cannot tell you what it was ;
But this I know : it did but pass.
It passed away with sunny May,
With all sweet things it passed
away,
And left me old, and cold, and grey.

20 November 1855.

AN AFTER-THOUGHT

OH lost garden Paradise !—
Were the roses redder there
Than they blossom elsewhere ?
Was the night's delicious shade
More intensely star-inlaid ?
Who can tell what memories
Of lost beloved Paradise
Saddened Eve with sleepless eyes ?

Fair first mother lulled to rest
In a choicer garden-nest,
Curtained with a softer shading
Than thy tenderest child is laid in,—
Was the sundawn brighter far
Than our daily sundawns are ?
Was that love, first love of all,
Warmer, deeper, better worth,
Than has warmed poor hearts of
earth
Since the utter ruinous fall ?

Ah supremely happy once,
Ah supremely broken-hearted
When her tender feet departed
From the accustomed paths of
peace !
Catching Angel orisons
For the last last time of all,
Shedding tears that would not
cease
For the bitter fall.

Yet the accustomed hand for leading,
Yet the accustomed heart for
love :
Sure she kept one part of Eden
Angels could not strip her of.
Sure the fiery messenger
Kindling for his outraged Lord,
Willing with the perfect Will,
Yet rejoiced the flaming sword,
Chastening sore but sparing
still,
Shut her treasure out with her.

What became of Paradise ?
Did the cedars droop at all
(Springtide hastening to the fall)
Missing the beloved hand—
Or did their green perfection
stand
Unmoved beneath the perfect
skies ?—

Paradise was rapt on high,
 It lies before the gate of
 Heaven :—
 Eve now slumbers there forgiven,
 Slumbers Rachel comforted,
 Slumber all the blessed dead
 Of days and months and years
 gone by,
 A solemn swelling company.

They wait for us beneath the trees
 Of Paradise, that lap of ease :
 They wait for us, till God shall please.
 Oh come the day of death, that day
 Of rest which cannot pass away !
 When the last work is wrought, the
 last
 Pang of pain is felt and past,
 And the blessed door made fast.

18 December 1855.

TO THE END

THERE are lilies for her sisters—
 (Who so cold as they ?)—
 And heartsease for one I must not
 name
 When I am far away.
 I shall pluck the lady lilies
 And fancy all the rest :
 I shall pluck the bright-eyed hearts-
 ease
 For her sake I love the best :
 As I wander on with weary feet
 Toward the twilight shadowy west.

O bird that flyest eastward
 Unto that sunny land,
 Oh wilt thou light on lilies white
 Beside her whiter hand ?
 Soft summer wind that breathest
 Of perfumes and sweet spice,

Ah tell her what I dare not tell
 Of watchful waiting eyes,
 Of love that yet may meet again
 In distant Paradise.

I go from earth to heaven
 A dim uncertain road,
 A houseless pilgrim through the
 world

Unto a sure abode :
 While evermore an Angel
 Goes with me day and night,
 A ministering spirit
 From the land of light,
 My holy fellow-servant sent
 To guide my steps aright.

I wonder if the Angels
 Love with such love as ours,
 If for each other's sake they pluck
 And keep eternal flowers.
 Alone I am and weary,
 Alone yet not alone :

Her soul talks with me by the way
 From tedious stone to stone,
 A blessed Angel treads with me
 The awful paths unknown.

When will the long road end in rest,
 The sick bird perch and brood ?
 When will my Guardian fold his
 wings

At rest in the finished good ?
 Lulling, lulling me off to sleep :
 While Death's strong hand doth
 roll

My sins behind his back,
 And my life up like a scroll,
 Till through sleep I hear kind Angels
 Rejoicing at the goal.

If her spirit went before me
 Up from night to day,
 It would pass me like the lightning
 That kindles on its way.

I should feel it like the lightning
 Flashing fresh from heaven :
 I should long for heaven sevenfold
 more,
 Yea and sevenfold seven :
 Should pray as I have not prayed
 before,
 And strive as I have not striven.

She will learn new love in heaven,
 Who is so full of love ;
 She will learn new depths of tender-
 ness
 Who is tender like a dove.
 Her heart will no more sorrow,
 Her eyes will weep no more :
 Yet it may be she will yearn
 And look back from far before :
 Lingering on the golden threshold
 And leaning from the door.
 18 December 1855.

MAY

‘SWEET Life is dead.’—‘Not so :
 I meet him day by day,
 Where bluest fountains flow
 And trees are white as snow,
 For it is time of May.
 Even now from long ago
 He will not say me nay.
 He is most fair to see :
 And if I wander forth, I know
 He wanders forth with me.’

‘But Life is dead to me :
 The worn-out year was failing,
 West winds took up a wailing
 To watch his funeral :
 Bare poplars shivered tall
 And lank vines stretched to see.
 ’Twixt him and me a wall
 Was frozen of earth-like stone

With brambles overgrown :
 Chill darkness wrapped him like a
 pall,
 And I am left alone.’

‘How can you call him dead ?
 He buds out everywhere :
 In every hedgerow rank,
 On every moss-grown bank,
 I find him here and there.
 He crowns my willing head
 With May-flowers white and red,
 He rears my tender heartsease-
 bed :
 He makes my branch to bud and
 bear,
 And blossoms where I tread.

31 December 1855.

SHUT OUT

THE door was shut. I looked be-
 tween
 Its iron bars ; and saw it lie,
 My garden, mine, beneath the sky,
 Pied with all flowers bedewed and
 green.

From bough to bough the song-birds
 crossed,
 From flower to flower the moths
 and bees :
 With all its nests and stately trees
 It had been mine, and it was lost.

A shadowless spirit kept the gate,
 Blank and unchanging like the
 grave.
 I, peering through, said ; ‘Let me
 have
 Some buds to cheer my outcast
 state.’

He answered not. 'Or give me,
then,
But one small twig from shrub or
tree ;
And bid my home remember me
Until I come to it again.'

The spirit was silent ; but he took
Mortar and stone to build a wall ;
He left no loophole great or small
Through which my straining eyes
might look.

So now I sit here quite alone,
Blinded with tears ; nor grieve
for that,
For nought is left worth looking at
Since my delightful land is gone.

A violet bed is budding near,
Wherein a lark has made her nest ;
And good they are, but not the
best ;
And dear they are, but not so dear.
20 January 1856.

BY THE WATER

THERE are rivers lapsing down
Lily-laden to the sea :
Every lily is a boat
For bees, one, two, or three :
I wish there were a fairy boat
For you, my friend, and me.

And if there were a fairy boat
And if the river bore us,
We should not care for all the past
Nor all that lies before us,
Not for the hopes that buoyed us
once,
Not for the fears that tore us.

We would rock upon the river
Scarcely floating by,

R

Rocking, rocking like the lilies,
You, my friend, and I :
Rocking like the stately lilies
Beneath the statelier sky.

But ah where is that river
Whose hyacinth banks descend
Down to the sweeter lilies
Till soft their shadows blend
Into a watery twilight ?—
And ah where is my friend ?
7 February 1856.

A CHILLY NIGHT

I ROSE at the dead of night,
And went to the lattice alone
To look for my Mother's ghost
Where the ghostly moonlight
shone.

My friends had failed one by one,
Middle-aged, young, and old,
Till the ghosts were warmer to me
Than my friends that had grown
cold.

I looked and I saw the ghosts
Dotting plain and mound :
They stood in the blank moonlight,
But no shadow lay on the ground :
They spoke without a voice
And they leaped without a sound.

I called : 'O my Mother dear,'—
I sobbed : 'O my Mother kind,
Make a lonely bed for me
And shelter it from the wind.

'Tell the others not to come
To see me night or day :
But I need not tell my friends
To be sure to keep away.'

Y

My Mother raised her eyes,
They were blank and could not
see :

Yet they held me with their stare
While they seemed to look at me.

She opened her mouth and spoke ;
I could not hear a word,
While my flesh crept on my bones
And every hair was stirred.

She knew that I could not hear
The message that she told
Whether I had long to wait
Or soon should sleep in the mould :
I saw her toss her shadowless hair
And wring her hands in the cold.

I strained to catch her words,
And she strained to make me hear ;
But never a sound of words
Fell on my straining ear.

From midnight to the cockcrow
I kept my watch in pain
While the subtle ghosts grew
subtler
In the sad night on the wane.

From midnight to the cockcrow
I watched till all were gone,
Some to sleep in the shifting sea
And some under turf and stone :
Living had failed and dead had failed,
And I was indeed alone.

11 February 1856.

LET PATIENCE HAVE HER PERFECT WORK

I SAW a bird alone,
In its nest it sat alone,
For its mate was dead or flown
Though it was early Spring.
Hard by were buds half-blown,
With cornfields freshly sown :

It could only perch and moan
That used to sing :
Droop in sorrow left alone :
A sad sad thing.

I saw a star alone,
In blue heaven it hung alone,
A solitary throne
In the waste of space :
Where no moon-glories are,
Where not a second star
Beams through night from near or far
To that lone place.
Its beauties all unknown,
Its glories all alone,
Sad in heaven's face.

Doth the bird desire a mate,
Pine for a second mate,
Whose first joy was so great
With its own dove ?

Doth the star supreme in night
Desire a second light
To make it seem less bright
In the shrine of heavenly height
That is above ?—

Ah better wait alone,
In nest or heaven alone,
Forsaken or unknown :
Till, time being past and gone,
Full eternity rolls on,
While patience reaps what it has
sown

In the harvest-land of love.

12 March 1856.

IN THE LANE

WHEN my love came home to me,
Pleasant summer bringing,
Every tree was out in leaf,
Every bird was singing.

There I met her in the lane
 By those waters gleamy,
 Met her toward the fall of day,
 Warm and dear and dreamy.
 Did I loiter in the lane?
 None was there to see me.

Only roses in the hedge,
 Lilies on the river,
 Saw our greeting fast and fond,
 Counted gift and giver,
 Saw me take her to my home,
 Take her home for ever.
 3 May 1856.

ACME

SLEEP, unforgotten sorrow, sleep
 awhile:

Make even awhile as though I
 might forget;
 Let the wound staunch thy tedious
 fingers fret,

Till once again I look abroad and
 smile,

Warmed in the sunlight: let no
 tears defile

This hour's content, no conscious
 thorns beset

My path: O sorrow, slumber,
 slumber yet

A moment, rouse not yet the
 smouldering pile.

So shalt thou wake again with
 added strength,

O unforgotten sorrow, stir again
 The slackening fire, refine the
 lulling pain

To quickened torture and a
 subtler edge.

The wrung cord snaps at last:
 beneath the wedge

The toughest oak groans long but
 rends at length.

9 May 1856.

A BED OF FORGET-ME-NOTS

Is Love so prone to change and
 rot

We are fain to rear Forget-me-not
 By measure in a garden-plot?—

I love its growth at large and free
 By untrod path and unlopped tree,
 Or nodding by the unpruned hedge,
 Or on the water's dangerous edge
 Where flags and meadowsweet blow
 rank

With rushes on the quaking bank.

Love is not taught in learning's
 school,

Love is not parcelled out by rule:
 Hath curb or call an answer got?—
 So free must be Forget-me-not.

Give me the flame no dampness
 dulls,

The passion of the instinctive pulse,
 Love steadfast as a fixed star,
 Tender as doves with nestlings are,
 More large than time, more strong
 than death:

This all creation travails of—
 She groans not for a passing breath—
 This is Forget-me-not and Love.

17 June 1856.

LOOK ON THIS PICTURE
 AND ON THIS

I WISH we once were wedded,—
 then I must be true:
 You should hold my will in yours to
 do or to undo:

But I hate myself now, Eva,
 when I look at you.

You have seen her hazel eyes, her
warm dark skin,
Dark hair—but oh those hazel eyes
a devil is dancing in :—
You, my saint, lead up to heaven,
she lures down to sin.

She's so redundant, stately :—in
truth now have you seen
Ever anywhere such beauty, such a
stature, such a mien ?
She may be queen of devils, but
she's every inch a queen.

If you sing to me, I hear her subtler
sweeter still
Whispering in each tender cadence
strangely sweet to fill
All that lacks in music, all my soul
and sense and will.

But you ask, 'Why struggle? I
have given you up :
Take again your pledges, snap the
cord and break the cup :
Feast you with your temptation,
for I in heaven will sup.'

Can I bear to think upon you strong
to break not bend,
Pale with inner intense passion,
silent to the end,
Bear to leave you, bear to grieve
you, O my dove, my friend ?

Listening so, I hide mine eyes and
fancy years to come :
You cherished in another home
with no cares burdensome :
You straitened in a winding-sheet,
pulseless, at peace, and dumb.

Open house and heart, barred to
me alone the door :
Children bound to meet her,
babies crow before :
Blessed wife and blessed mother
whom I may see no more.

Or I fancy—In the grave her
comely body lies :
She is 'tiring for the Bridegroom
till the morning star shall rise,
Then to shine a glory in the nuptials
of the skies.

No more yearning tenderness, no
more pale regret :
She will not look for me when
the marriage-guests are set,
She joys with joy eternal as we
had never met.

I would that one of us were dead,
were gone no more to meet,
Or she and I were dead together
stretched here at your feet :
That she and I were strained to-
gether in one winding-sheet.

How have you the heart to face me
with that passion in your stare
Deathly silent? Weep before me,
rave at me in your despair :—
If you keep patience, wings will
spring and a halo from your
hair.

See now how proud you are, like
us after all, no saint :
Not so upright but that you are
bowed with the old bent :
White at white-heat, tainted with
the devil's special taint.

Did I love you? Never from the
first cold day to this :
You are not sufficient for my aim of
life, my bliss :
You are not sufficient, but I found
the one that is.

Then did I never love you?—ah the
sting struck home at last !
You are drooping, fainting, dying
—the worst of death is past—
A light is on your face from the
nearing heaven forecast.

Never?—yes I loved you then : I
loved, the word still charms :
For the first time, last time, lie
here in my heart, my arms,
For the first last time, as if I
shielded you from harms.

For after all I loved you, loved you
then, I love you yet :
Listen, love, I love you : see, the
seal of truth is set
On my face, in tears—you cannot
see? then feel them wet.

Pause at heaven's dear gate, look
back, one moment back to
grieve :

You go home through death to life :
but I, I still must live :

On the threshold of heaven's love,
O love, can you forgive?—

Fully freely fondly, with heart-truth
above an oath,

With eager utter pardon given un-
asked and nothing loth,

Heaping coals of fire upon our
heads, forgiving both.

One word more—not one ! One
look more—too late, too late !
Lapped in love she sleeps who was
lashed with scorn and hate :
Nestling in the lap of Love the dove
has found a mate.

Night has come, the night of rest :
day will come, that day :
To her glad dawn of glory kindled
from the deathless ray :
To us a searching fire and strict
balances to weigh.

The tearless tender eyes are closed,
the tender lips are dumb—
I shall not see or hear them more
until that day shall come :
Then they must speak ; what will
they say?—what then will be
the sum?—

Shall we stand upon the left, and
she upon the right—
We smirched with endless death and
shame, she glorified in white—
Will she sound our accusation in
intolerable light?

12 July 1856.

GONE BEFORE

SHE was most like a rose when it
flushes rarest,
She was most like a lily when it
blows fairest,
She was most like a violet sweetest
on the bank :
Now she's only like the snow, cold
and blank,
After the sun sank.

She left us in the early days ; she
 would not linger
 For orange blossoms in her hair, or
 ring on finger :
 Did she deem windy grass more
 good than these ?
 Now the turf that's between us and
 the hedging trees
 Might as well be seas.

I had trained a branch she shelters
 not under,
 I had reared a flower she snapped
 asunder :
 In the bush and on the stately
 bough
 Birds sing ; she who watched them
 track the plough
 Cannot hear them now.

Every bird has a nest hidden
 somewhere
 For itself and its mate and joys
 that come there,—
 Though it soar to the clouds,
 finding there its rest :
 You sang in the height, but no more
 with eager breast
 Stoop to your own nest.

If I could win you back from
 heaven-gate lofty,
 Perhaps you would but grieve,
 returning softly :
 Surely they would miss you in the
 blessed throng,
 Miss your sweet voice in their
 sweetest song,
 Reckon time too long.

Earth is not good enough for you,
 my sweet, my sweetest ;
 Life on earth seemed long to you,
 though to me fleetest ;

I would not wish you back if a wish
 would do :

Only, love, I long for heaven
 with you,
 Heart-pierced through and
 through.

12 July 1856.

THE HOUR AND THE GHOST

BRIDE

O LOVE, love, hold me fast,
 He draws me away from thee ;
 I cannot stem the blast,
 Nor the cold strong sea :
 Far away a light shines
 Beyond the hills and pines ;
 It is lit for me.

BRIDEGROOM

I have thee close, my dear,
 No terror can come near ;
 Only far off the northern light shines
 clear.

GHOST

Come with me, fair and false,
 To our home, come home.
 It is my voice that calls :
 Once thou wast not afraid
 When I woo'd, and said,
 'Come, our nest is newly made'—
 Now cross the tossing foam.

BRIDE

Hold me one moment longer !
 He taunts me with the past,
 His clutch is waxing stronger ;
 Hold me fast, hold me fast.
 He draws me from thy heart,
 And I cannot withhold :
 He bids my spirit depart

With him into the cold :—
Oh bitter vows of old !

BRIDEGROOM

Lean on me, hide thine eyes :
Only ourselves, earth and skies,
Are present here : be wise.

GHOST

Lean on me, come away,
I will guide and steady :
Come, for I will not stay :
Come, for house and bed are ready.
Ah sure bed and house,
For better and worse, for life and
death,
Goal won with shortened breath !
Come, crown our vows.

BRIDE

One moment, one more word,
While my heart beats still,
While my breath is stirred
By my fainting will.
O friend, forsake me not,
Forget not as I forgot :
But keep thy heart for me,
Keep thy faith true and bright ;
Through the lone cold winter night
Perhaps I may come to thee.

BRIDEGROOM

Nay peace, my darling, peace :
Let these dreams and terrors cease :
Who spoke of death or change or
aught but ease ?

GHOST

O fair frail sin,
O poor harvest gathered in !
Thou shalt visit him again
To watch his heart grow cold :

To know the gnawing pain
I knew of old ;
To see one much more fair
Fill up the vacant chair,
Fill his heart, his children bear ;
While thou and I together,
In the outcast weather,
Toss and howl and spin.

11 September 1856.

LIGHT LOVE

‘OH sad thy lot before I came,
But sadder when I go,—
My presence but a flash of flame,
A transitory glow
Between two barren wastes like
snow.
What wilt thou do when I am gone ?
Where wilt thou rest, my dear ?
For cold thy bed to rest upon,
And cold the falling year
Whose withered leaves are lost and
sere.’

She hushed the baby at her breast :
She rocked it on her knee :
‘And I will rest my lonely rest,
Warmed with the thought of thee,
Rest lulled to rest by memory.’
She hushed the baby with her kiss,
She hushed it with her breast :
‘Is death so sadder much than
this ?
Sure death that builds a nest
For those who elsewhere cannot
rest.’

‘Oh sad thy note, my mateless dove,
With tender nestling cold :
But hast thou ne’er another love
Left from the days of old
To build thy nest of silk and gold ?

To warm thy paleness to a blush
 When I am far away,—
 To warm thy coldness to a flush
 And turn thee back to May,
 And turn thy twilight back to day.'

She did not answer him a word,
 But leaned her face aside,
 Sick with the pain of hope deferred
 And sore with wounded pride :
 He knew his very soul had lied.
 She strained his baby in her arms,
 His baby to her heart :
 'Even let it go, the love that harms ;
 We two will never part :
 Mine own, his own, how dear thou
 art !'

'Now never tease me, tender-eyed,
 Sigh-voiced,' he said in scorn :
 'For nigh at hand there blooms a
 bride,
 My bride before the morn :
 Ripe-blooming she, as thou forlorn.
 Ripe-blooming she, my rose, my
 peach :
 She wooes me day and night :
 I watch her tremble in my reach :
 She reddens, my delight,
 She ripens, reddens, in my sight.'

'And is she like a sunlit rose ?
 Am I like withered leaves ?
 Haste where thy spicèd garden
 blows :
 But in bare autumn eves
 Wilt thou have store of harvest-
 sheaves ?
 Thou leavest love, true love behind,
 To seek a love as true :
 Go seek in haste,—but wilt thou
 find ?
 Change new again for new,
 Pluck up, enjoy, yea trample too.

'Alas for her, poor faded rose,
 Alas for her like me,
 Cast down and trampled in the
 snows.'—

'Like thee ? nay not like thee :
 She leans, but from a guarded tree.
 Farewell, and dream as long ago
 Before we ever met :
 Farewell : my swift-paced horse
 seems slow.'—

She raised her eyes, not wet
 But hard, to Heaven : 'Dost Thou
 forget ?'

28 October 1856.

DOWNCAST

THESE roses are as perfect as of
 old,
 Those lilies wear their selfsame
 sunny white ;
 I, only I, am changed and sad and
 cold.
 The morning star still glorifies
 the night,
 And musical that fountain in its
 swell
 Casts as of old its waters to the
 light.
 Oh that I were a rose, so I might
 dwell
 Contented in a garden on my
 thorn,
 Fulfilling mine appointed fragrance
 well ;
 Or stainless lily in the summer
 morn—
 Though no man pluck it, yet the
 honey-bee
 Knows it for sweetness in its
 bosom born.
 Or that I were a star, from sea to
 sea

Guiding the seekers to their port
of rest,
Guiding them till night's shuffling
shadows flee ;
Or that I were a spring to which,
opprest
With desert drought, some wearied
wayfarer
Comes from the barren regions of
the West.
Then should I stand at peace, and
should not err,
Or lighten and make beautiful
the sky,
Or make more glad than frank-
incense and myrrh.
But now it is not so : I, only I,
Am changed and sad and cold,
while in my soul
The very fountain of delight is
dry.

12 December 1856.

A TRIAD

THREE sang of love together : one
with lips
Crimson, with cheeks and bosom
in a glow,
Flushed to the yellow hair and
finger-tips ;
And one there sang who soft and
smooth as snow
Bloomed like a tinted hyacinth at
a show ;
And one was blue with famine after
love,
Who like a harpstring snapped
rang harsh and low
The burden of what those were sing-
ing of.
One shamed herself in love ; one
temperately

Grew gross in soulless love, a
sluggish wife ;
One famished died for love. Thus
two of three
Took death for love and won him
after strife ;
One droned in sweetness like a
fatted bee :
All on the threshold, yet all short
of life.

18 December 1856.

LOVE FROM THE NORTH

I HAD a love in soft south land,
Beloved through April far in May ;
He waited on my lightest breath,
And never dared to say me nay.

He saddened if my cheer was sad,
But gay he grew if I was gay ;
We never differed on a hair,
My yes his yes, my nay his nay.

The wedding hour was come, the
aisles
Were flushed with sun and flowers
that day ;
I pacing balanced in my thoughts :
'It's quite too late to think of
nay.'—

My bridegroom answered in his
turn,
Myself had almost answered
'yea :'
When through the flashing nave I
heard
A struggle and resounding 'nay.'

Bridemaids and bridegroom shrank
in fear,
But I stood high who stood at
bay :

'And if I answer yea, fair Sir,
What man art thou to bar with
nay?'

He was a strong man from the north,
Light-locked, with eyes of danger-
ous grey :

'Put yea by for another time
In which I will not say thee nay.'

He took me in his strong white arms,
He bore me on his horse away
O'er crag, morass, and hairbreadth
pass,
But never asked me yea or nay.

He made me fast with book and
bell,
With links of love he makes me
stay ;

Till now I've neither heart nor power
Nor will nor wish to say him nay.
19 December 1856.

IN AN ARTIST'S STUDIO

ONE face looks out from all his
canvases,

One selfsame figure sits or walks
or leans :

We found her hidden just behind
those screens,

That mirror gave back all her love-
liness.

A queen in opal or in ruby dress,
A nameless girl in freshest
summer-greens,
A saint, an angel—every canvas
means

The same one meaning, neither
more nor less.

He feeds upon her face by day and
night,

And she with true kind eyes looks
back on him,
Fair as the moon and joyful as the
light :

Not wan with waiting, not with
sorrow dim ;

Not as she is, but was when hope
shone bright ;

Not as she is, but as she fills his
dream.

24 December 1856.

FATA MORGANA

A BLUE-EYED phantom far before
Is laughing, leaping toward the
sun :

Like lead I chase it evermore,
I pant and run.

It breaks the sunlight bound on
bound :

Goes singing as it leaps along
To sheep-bells with a dreamy sound
A dreamy song.

I laugh, it is so brisk and gay ;
It is so far before, I weep :

I hope I shall lie down some day,
Lie down and sleep.

18 April 1857.

ONE DAY

I WILL tell you when they met :

In the limpid days of Spring ;
Elder boughs were budding yet,
Oaken boughs looked wintry still,
But primrose and veined violet

In the mossful turf were set,
While meeting birds made haste to
sing

And build with right good will.

I will tell you when they parted ;
 When plenteous Autumn sheaves
 were brown
 Then they parted heavy-hearted ;
 The full rejoicing sun looked down
 As grand as in the days before ;
 Only they had lost a crown ;
 Only to them those days of yore
 Could come back nevermore.

When shall they meet ? I cannot
 tell,
 Indeed, when they shall meet again,
 Except some day in Paradise :
 For this they wait, one waits in pain.
 Beyond the sea of death Love lies
 For ever, yesterday, to-day ;
 Angels shall ask them, ' Is it well ? '
 And they shall answer ' Yea.'
6 June 1857.

INTROSPECTIVE

I WISH it were over the terrible pain,
 Pang after pang again and again :
 First the shattering ruining blow,
 Then the probing steady and slow.

Did I wince ? I did not faint :
 My soul broke but was not bent :
 Up I stand like a blasted tree
 By the shore of the shivering sea.

On my boughs neither leaf nor fruit,
 No sap in my uttermost root,
 Brooding in an anguish dumb
 On the short past and the long to-
 come.

Dumb I was when the ruin fell,
 Dumb I remain and will never tell ;
 O my soul, I talk with thee,
 But not another the sight must see.

I did not start when the torture
 stung,
 I did not faint when the torture
 wrung :
 Let it come tenfold if come it must,
 But I will not groan when I bite
 the dust.
30 June 1857.

A PEAL OF BELLS

STRIKE the bells wantonly,
 Tinkle tinkle well ;
 Bring me wine, bring me flowers,
 Ring the silver bell.
 All my lamps burn scented oil,
 Hung on laden orange-trees,
 Whose shadowed foliage is the foil
 To golden lamps and oranges.
 Heap my golden plates with fruit,
 Golden fruit, fresh-plucked and
 ripe ;
 Strike the bells and breathe the
 pipe ;
 Shut out showers from summer
 hours—
 Silence that complaining lute—
 Shut out thinking, shut out pain,
 From hours that cannot come again.

Strike the bells solemnly,
 Ding dong deep :
 My friend is passing to his bed,
 Fast asleep ;
 There's plaited linen round his head,
 While foremost go his feet—
 His feet that cannot carry him.
 My feast's a show, my lights are
 din ;
 Be still, your music is not sweet,—
 There is no music more for him.
 His lights are out, his feast is
 done :

His bowl that sparkled to the brim
Is drained, is broken, cannot hold ;
My blood is chill, his blood is cold ;
His death is full, and mine begun.

7 July 1857.

IN THE ROUND TOWER AT JHANSI

8 JUNE 1857

A HUNDRED, a thousand to one ;
even so ;

Not a hope in the world remained :
The swarming howling wretches
below
Gained and gained and gained.

Skene looked at his pale young
wife.

‘Is the time come ?’—‘The time
is come.’

Young, strong, and so full of life,
The agony struck them dumb.

Close his arm about her now,
Close her cheek to his,
Close the pistol to her brow—
God forgive them this !

‘Will it hurt much ?’—‘No, mine
own :

I wish I could bear the pang for
both.’—

‘I wish I could bear the pang alone :
Courage, dear, I am not loth.’

Kiss and kiss : ‘It is not pain
Thus to kiss and die.

One kiss more.’—‘And yet one
again.’—

‘Good-bye.’—‘Good-bye.’

September 1857.

DAY-DREAMS

GAZING through her chamber window
Sits my soul’s dear soul :
Looking northward, looking south-
ward,

Looking to the goal,
Looking back without control.

I have strewn thy path, beloved,
With plumed meadowsweet,
Iris and pale perfumed lilies,
Roses most complete :
Wherefore pause on listless feet ?

But she sits and never answers,
Gazing, gazing still
On swift fountain, shadowed valley,
Cedared sunlit hill :
Who can guess or read her will ?

Who can guess or read the spirit
Shrined within her eyes,
Part a longing, part a languor,
Part a mere surprise,
While slow mists do rise and rise ?

Is it love she looks and longs for,
Is it rest or peace,
Is it slumber self-forgetful
In its utter ease,
Is it one or all of these ?

So she sits and doth not answer
With her dreaming eyes,
With her languid look delicious,
Almost paradise,
Less than happy, over-wise.

Answer me, O self-forgetful—
Or of what beside ?

Is it day-dream of a maiden,
Vision of a bride,
Is it knowledge, love, or pride ?

Cold she sits through all my kindling,
Deaf to all I pray :
I have wasted might and wisdom,
Wasted night and day :
Deaf she dreams to all I say.

Now if I could guess her secret,
Were it worth the guess?—
Time is lessening, hope is lessening,
Love grows less and less :
What care I for no or yes?

I will give her stately burial,
Though, when she lies dead :
For dear memory of the past time,
Of her royal head,
Of the much I strove and said.

I will give her stately burial,
Stately willow-branches bent :
Have her carved in alabaster,
As she dreamed and leant
While I wondered what she meant.

8 September 1857.

A NIGHTMARE

FRAGMENT

I HAVE a friend in ghostland—
Early found, ah me how early lost!—
Blood-red seaweeds drip along that
coastland
By the strong sea wrenched
and tost.

If I wake he hunts me like a
nightmare :

I feel my hair stand up, my body
creep :
Without light I see a blasting sight
there,
See a secret I must keep.

12 September 1857.

ANOTHER SPRING

If I might see another Spring,
I'd not plant summer flowers and
wait :

I'd have my crocuses at once,
My leafless pink mezereons,
My chill-veined snowdrops, choicer
yet

My white or azure violet,
Leaf-nested primrose ; anything
To blow at once, not late.

If I might see another Spring,
I'd listen to the daylight birds
That build their nests and pair and
sing,

Nor wait for mateless nightingale ;
I'd listen to the lusty herds,
The ewes with lambs as white as
snow,

I'd find out music in the hail
And all the winds that blow.

If I might see another Spring—
Oh stinging comment on my past
That all my past results in 'if'—

If I might see another Spring
I'd laugh to-day, to-day is brief ;
I would not wait for anything :

I'd use to-day that cannot last,
Be glad to-day and sing.

15 September 1857.

FOR ONE SAKE

ONE passed me like a flash of
lightning by,
To ring clear bells of heaven
beyond the stars.
Then said I : Wars and rumours
of your wars

Are dull with din of what and where
and why :
My heart is where these troubles
draw not nigh :
Let me alone till heaven shall
burst its bars,
Break up its fountains, roll its
flashing cars
Earthwards with fire to test and
purify.
Let me alone to-night, and one night
more
Of which I shall not count the
eventide :
Its morrow will not be as days
before.
Let me alone to dream, perhaps to
weep :
To dream of her the imperishable
bride,
Dream while I wake and dream on
while I sleep.

25 October 1857.

MEMORY

I

I NURSED it in my bosom while it
lived,
I hid it in my heart when it was
dead.
In joy I sat alone; even so I grieved
Alone, and nothing said.

I shut the door to face the naked
truth,
I stood alone—I faced the truth
alone,
Stripped bare of self-regard or forms
or ruth
Till first and last were shown.

I took the perfect balances and
weighed ;
No shaking of my hand disturbed
the poise ;
Weighed, found it wanting : not a
word I said,
But silent made my choice.

None know the choice I made ; I
make it still.
None know the choice I made
and broke my heart,
Breaking mine idol : I have braced
my will
Once, chosen for once my part.

I broke it at a blow, I laid it cold,
Crushed in my deep heart where
it used to live.
My heart dies inch by inch ; the
time grows old,
Grows old in which I grieve.

8 November 1857.

II

I have a room whereinto no one
enters
Save I myself alone :
There sits a blessed memory on
a throne,
There my life centres ;

While winter comes and goes—oh
tedious comer !—
And while its nip-wind blows ;
While bloom the bloodless lily
and warm rose
Of lavish summer.

If any should force entrance he
might see there
One buried yet not dead,
Before whose face I no more bow
my head
Or bend my knee there ;

But often in my worn life's autumn
weather

I watch there with clear eyes,
And think how it will be in
Paradise

When we're together.

17 February 1865.

A BIRTHDAY

My heart is like a singing bird
Whose nest is in a watered shoot :

My heart is like an apple-tree
Whose boughs are bent with
thickset fruit ;

My heart is like a rainbow shell
That paddles in a halcyon sea ;
My heart is gladder than all these
Because my love is come to me.

Raise me a dais of silk and down ;
Hang it with vair and purple dyes ;
Carve it in doves and pomegranates,
And peacocks with a hundred
eyes ;

Work it in gold and silver grapes,
In leaves and silver fleurs-de-lys ;
Because the birthday of my life
Is come, my love is come to me.

18 November 1857.

AN APPLE GATHERING

I PLUCKED pink blossoms from
mine apple-tree

And wore them all that evening
in my hair :

Then in due season when I went to
see

I found no apples there.

With dangling basket all along the
grass

As I had come I went the self-
same track :

My neighbours mocked me while
they saw me pass

So empty-handed back.

Lilian and Lillas smiled in trudging
by,

Their heaped-up basket teased
me like a jeer ;

Sweet-voiced they sang beneath the
sunset sky,

Their mother's home was near.

Plump Gertrude passed me with her
basket full,

A stronger hand than hers helped
it along ;

A voice talked with her through the
shadows cool

More sweet to me than song.

Ah Willie, Willie, was my love less
worth

Than apples with their green
leaves piled above ?

I counted rosiest apples on the earth
Of far less worth than love.

So once it was with me you stooped
to talk

Laughing and listening in this
very lane ;

To think that by this way we used
to walk

We shall not walk again !

I let my neighbours pass me, ones
and twos

And groups ; the latest said the
night grew chill,

And hastened : but I loitered ; while
the dews
Fell fast I loitered still.

23 November 1857.

WINTER : MY SECRET

I TELL my secret ? No indeed, not I :
Perhaps some day, who knows ?
But not to-day ; it froze, and blows,
and snows,
And you're too curious : fie !
You want to hear it ? well :
Only, my secret's mine, and I won't
tell.

Or, after all, perhaps there's none :
Suppose there is no secret after all,
But only just my fun.

To-day's a nipping day, a biting day ;
In which one wants a shawl,
A veil, a cloak, and other wraps :
I cannot ope to every one who taps,
And let the draughts come whistling
through my hall ;

Come bounding and surrounding me,
Come buffeting, astounding me,
Nipping and clipping through my
wraps and all.

I wear my mask for warmth : who
ever shows

His nose to Russian snows
To be pecked at by every wind that
blows ?

You would not peck ? I thank you
for good will,
Believe, but leave that truth un-
tested still.

Spring's an expansive time : yet I
don't trust

March with its peck of dust,
Nor April with its rainbow-crowned
brief showers,

Nor even May, whose flowers
One frost may wither through the
sunless hours.

Perhaps some languid summer day,
When drowsy birds sing less and
less,

And golden fruit is ripening to
excess,

If there's not too much sun nor too
much cloud,

And the warm wind is neither still
nor loud,

Perhaps my secret I may say,
Or you may guess.

23 November 1857.

MY FRIEND

Two days ago with dancing glancing
hair,

With living lips and eyes ;

Now pale, dumb, blind, she lies ;
So pale, yet still so fair.

We have not left her yet, not yet
alone ;

But soon must leave her where

She will not miss our care,

Bone of our bone.

Weep not ; O friends, we should
not weep :

Our friend of friends lies full of
rest ;

No sorrow rankles in her breast,
Fallen fast asleep.

She sleeps below,

She wakes and laughs above.

To-day, as she walked, let us
walk in love :

To-morrow follow so.

8 December 1857.

MAUDE CLARE

OUT of the church she followed them
 With a lofty step and mien :
 His bride was like a village maid,
 Maude Clare was like a queen.

'Son Thomas,' his lady mother said,
 With smiles, almost with tears :
 'May Nell and you but live as true
 As we have done for years ;

'Your father thirty years ago
 Had just your tale to tell ;
 But he was not so pale as you,
 Nor I so pale as Nell.'

My lord was pale with inward strife,
 And Nell was pale with pride ;
 My lord gazed long on pale Maude
 Clare
 Or ever he kissed the bride.

'Lo, I have brought my gift, my lord,
 Have brought my gift,' she said :
 'To bless the hearth, to bless the
 board,
 To bless the marriage-bed.

'Here's my half of the golden chain
 You wore about your neck,
 That day we waded ankle-deep
 For lilies in the beck.

'Here's my half of the faded leaves
 We plucked from budding bough,
 With feet amongst the lily leaves,—
 The lilies are budding now.'

He strove to match her scorn with
 scorn,

He faltered in his place :

'Lady,' he said,—'Maude Clare,' he
 said,—

'Maude Clare':—and hid his face.

R

She turned to Nell : 'My Lady Nell,
 I have a gift for you ;
 Though, were it fruit, the bloom
 were gone,
 Or, were it flowers, the dew.

'Take my share of a fickle heart,
 Mine of a paltry love :
 Take it or leave it as you will,
 I wash my hands thereof.'

'And what you leave,' said Nell,
 'I'll take,
 And what you spurn I'll wear ;
 For he's my lord for better and worse,
 And him I love, Maude Clare.

'Yea though you're taller by the
 head,
 More wise, and much more fair,
 I'll love him till he loves me best—
 Me best of all, Maude Clare.'

Towards February 1858.

AUTUMN

I DWELL alone—I dwell alone,
 alone,
 Whilst full my river flows down
 to the sea,

Gilded with flashing boats
 That bring no friend to me :

O love-songs, gurgling from a
 hundred throats,
 O love-pangs, let me be.

Fair fall the freighted boats which
 gold and stone

And spices bear to sea :

Slim gleaming maidens swell their
 mellow notes,

Love-promising, entreating—

Ah sweet but fleeting—

Z

Beneath the shivering, snow-white
sails.

Hush! the wind flags and fails—
Hush! they will lie becalmed in
sight of strand—

Sight of my strand, where I do
dwell alone;
Their songs wake singing echoes in
my land—
They cannot hear me moan.

One latest, solitary swallow flies
Across the sea, rough autumn-
tempest-tost:

Poor bird, shall it be lost?
Dropped down into this uncon-
genial sea,
With no kind eyes
To watch it while it dies,
Ungessed, uncared for, free:
Set free at last,
The short pang past,
In sleep, in death, in dreamless sleep
locked fast.

Mine avenue is all a growth of oaks,
Some rent by thunder strokes,
Some rustling leaves and acorns in
the breeze;
Fair fall my fertile trees,
That rear their goodly heads, and
live at ease.

A spider's web blocks all mine
avenue;
He catches down and foolish
painted flies,
That spider wary and wise.
Each morn it hangs a rainbow strung
with dew
Betwixt boughs green with sap,
So fair, few creatures guess it is
a trap:

I will not mar the web,
Though sad I am to see the small
lives ebb.

It shakes—my trees shake—for a
wind is roused
In cavern where it housed:
Each white and quivering sail
Of boats among the water-
leaves

Hollows and strains in the full-
throated gale:

Each maiden sings again—
Each languid maiden, whom the
calm
Had lulled to sleep with rest and
spice and balm.
Miles down my river to the sea
They float and wane,
Long miles away from me.

Perhaps they say: 'She
grieves,
Uplifted like a beacon on her
tower.'

Perhaps they say: 'One
hour
More, and we dance among the
golden sheaves.'

Perhaps they say: 'One hour
More, and we stand,
Face to face, hand in
hand;
Make haste, O slack gale, to the
looked-for land!'

My trees are not in flower,
I have no bower,
And gusty creaks my tower,
And lonesome, very lonesome, is my
strand.

14 April 1858.

UP-HILL

DOES the road wind up-hill all the way?

Yes, to the very end.

Will the day's journey take the whole long day?

From morn to night, my friend.

But is there for the night a resting-place?

A roof for when the slow dark hours begin.

May not the darkness hide it from my face?

You cannot miss that inn.

Shall I meet other wayfarers at night?

Those who have gone before.

Then must I knock, or call when just in sight?

They will not keep you standing at that door.

Shall I find comfort, travel-sore and weak?

Of labour you shall find the sum.

Will there be beds for me and all who seek?

Yea, beds for all who come.

29 June 1858.

AT HOME

WHEN I was dead, my spirit turned
To seek the much-frequented house.

I passed the door, and saw my friends
Feasting beneath green orange-boughs;

From hand to hand they pushed the wine,

They sucked the pulp of plum and peach;

They sang, they jested, and they laughed,

For each was loved of each.

I listened to their honest chat.

Said one: 'To-morrow we shall be
Plod plod along the featureless sands,
And coasting miles and miles of sea.'

Said one: 'Before the turn of tide
We will achieve the eyrie-seat.'

Said one: 'To-morrow shall be like
To-day, but much more sweet.'

'To-morrow,' said they, strong with hope,

And dwelt upon the pleasant way:

'To-morrow,' cried they one and all,
While no one spoke of yesterday.

Their life stood full at blessed noon;
I, only I, had passed away:

'To-morrow and to-day,' they cried;

I was of yesterday.

I shivered comfortless, but cast

No chill across the tablecloth;

I all-forgotten shivered, sad

To stay and yet to part how loth:

I passed from the familiar room,

I who from love had passed away,

Like the remembrance of a guest

That tarrieth but a day.

29 June 1858.

TO-DAY AND TO-MORROW

I

ALL the world is out in leaf,

Half the world in flower,

Earth has waited weeks and weeks

For this special hour :
Faint the rainbow comes and goes
On a sunny shower.

All the world is making love :
Bird to bird in bushes,
Beast to beast in glades, and frog
To frog among the rushes :
Wake, O south wind sweet with
spice,
Wake the rose to blushes.

Life breaks forth to right and left—
Pipe wild-wood notes cheery.
Nevertheless there are the dead
Fast asleep and weary—
To-day we live, to-day we love,
Wake and listen, deary.

2

I wish I were dead, my foe,
My friend, I wish I were dead,
With a stone at my tired feet
And a stone at my tired head.

In the pleasant April days
Half the world will stir and sing,
But half the world will slug and rot
For all the sap of Spring.

29 June 1858.

THE CONVENT THRESHOLD

THERE'S blood between us, love, my
love,
There's father's blood, there's
brother's blood ;
And blood's a bar I cannot pass.
I choose the stairs that mount above,
Stair after golden sky-ward stair,
To city and to sea of glass.

My lily feet are soiled with mud,
With scarlet mud which tells a tale
Of hope that was, of guilt that was,
Of love that shall not yet avail ;
Alas, my heart, if I could bare
My heart, this selfsame stain is there :
I seek the sea of glass and fire
To wash the spot, to burn the snare ;
Lo, stairs are meant to lift us higher :
Mount with me, mount the kindled
stair.

Your eyes look earthward, mine look
up.
I see the far-off city grand,
Beyond the hills a watered land,
Beyond the gulf a gleaming strand
Of mansions where the righteous
sup ;
Who sleep at ease among their trees,
Or wake to sing a cadenced hymn
With Cherubim and Seraphim.
They bore the Cross, they drained
the cup,
Racked, roasted, crushed, wrenched
limb from limb,
They the offscouring of the world :
The heaven of starry heavens un-
furled,
The sun before their face is dim.

You looking earthward, what see
you ?
Milk-white, wine-flushed among the
vines,
Up and down leaping, to and fro,
Most glad, most full, made strong
with wines,
Blooming as peaches pearly with
dew,
Their golden windy hair afloat,
Love-music warbling in their throat,
Young men and women come and
go.

You linger, yet the time is short :
 Flee for your life, gird up your
 strength
 To flee ; the shadows stretched at
 length
 Show that day wanes, that night
 draws nigh ;
 Flee to the mountain, tarry not.
 Is this a time for smile and sigh,
 For songs among the secret trees
 Where sudden blue birds nest and
 sport ?
 The time is short and yet you stay :
 To-day, while it is called to-day,
 Kneel, wrestle, knock, do violence,
 pray ;
 To-day is short, to-morrow nigh :
 Why will you die ? why will you
 die ?

You sinned with me a pleasant sin :
 Repent with me, for I repent.
 Woe's me the lore I must unlearn !
 Woe's me that easy way we went,
 So rugged when I would return !
 How long until my sleep begin,
 How long shall stretch these nights
 and days ?
 Surely, clean Angels cry, she prays ;
 She laves her soul with tedious
 tears :
 How long must stretch these years
 and years ?

I turn from you my cheeks and
 eyes,
 My hair which you shall see no
 more—
 Alas for joy that went before,
 For joy that dies, for love that dies !
 Only my lips still turn to you,
 My livid lips that cry, Repent !
 O weary life, O weary Lent,
 O weary time whose stars are few !

How should I rest in Paradise,
 Or sit on steps of heaven alone ?
 If Saints and Angels spoke of love,
 Should I not answer from my throne,
 Have pity upon me, ye my friends,
 For I have heard the sound thereof.
 Should I not turn with yearning eyes,
 Turn earthwards with a pitiful pang ?
 Oh save me from a pang in heaven !
 By all the gifts we took and gave,
 Repent, repent, and be forgiven.
 This life is long, but yet it ends ;
 Repent and purge your soul and
 save :

No gladder song the morning stars
 Upon their birthday morning sang
 Than Angels sing when one repents.

I tell you what I dreamed last
 night.

A spirit with transfigured face
 Fire-footed clomb an infinite space.
 I heard his hundred pinions clang,
 Heaven-bells rejoicing rang and rang,
 Heaven-air was thrilled with subtle
 scents,
 Worlds spun upon their rushing cars :
 He mounted shrieking 'Give me
 light !'
 Still light was poured on him, more
 light ;

Angels, Archangels he outstripped,
 Exultant in exceeding might,
 And trod the skirts of Cherubim.
 Still 'Give me light,' he shrieked ;
 and dipped

His thirsty face, and drank a sea,
 Athirst with thirst it could not slake.
 I saw him, drunk with knowledge,
 take

From aching brows the aureole
 crown—

His locks writhe like a cloven
 snake—

He left his throne to grovel down
 And lick the dust of Seraphs' feet :
 For what is knowledge duly weighed?
 Knowledge is strong, but love is
 sweet ;

Yea all the progress he had made
 Was but to learn that all is small
 Save love, for love is all in all.

I tell you what I dreamed last
 night.

It was not dark, it was not light,
 Cold dews had drenched my plen-
 teous hair

Through clay ; you came to seek me
 there,

And 'Do you dream of me?' you
 said.

My heart was dust that used to leap
 To you ; I answered half asleep :

'My pillow is damp, my sheets are
 red,

There's a leaden tester to my bed :

Find you a warmer playfellow,

A warmer pillow for your head,

A kinder love to love than mine.'

You wrung your hands : while I, like
 lead,

Crushed downwards through the
 sodden earth :

You smote your hands but not in
 mirth,

And reeled but were not drunk with
 wine.

For all night long I dreamed of
 you :

I woke and prayed against my will,

Then slept to dream of you again.

At length I rose and knelt and
 prayed.

I cannot write the words I said,

My words were slow, my tears were
 few ;

But through the dark my silence
 spoke

Like thunder. When this morning
 broke,

My face was pinched, my hair was
 grey,

And frozen blood was on the sill

Where stifling in my struggle I lay.

If now you saw me you would say :

Where is the face I used to love ?

And I would answer : Gone before ;

It tarries veiled in Paradise.

When once the morning star shall
 rise,

When earth with shadow flees away

And we stand safe within the door,

Then you shall lift the veil thereof.

Look up, rise up : for far above

Our palms are grown, our place is
 set ;

There we shall meet as once we met,

And love with old familiar love.

9 July 1858.

YET A LITTLE WHILE

THESE days are long before I die :

To sit alone upon a thorn

Is what the nightingale forlorn

Does night by night continually :

She swells her heart to ecstasy

Until it bursts and she can die.

These days are long that wane and
 wax :

Waxeth and wanes the ghostly
 moon,

Achill and pale in cordial June :

What is it that she wandering lacks ?

She seems as one that aches and
 aches,

Most sick to wane, most sick to wax.

Of all the sad sights in the world
 The downfall of an Autumn leaf
 Is grievous and suggesteth grief :
 Who thought when Spring was fresh
 unfurled
 Of this ? when Spring-twigs gleamed
 impearled
 Who thought of frost that nips the
 world ?

There are a hundred subtle stings
 To prick us in our daily walk :
 A young fruit cankered on its
 stalk,
 A strong bird snared for all his
 wings,
 A nest that sang but never sings :
 Yea sight and sound and silence
 stings.

There is a lack in solitude,
 There is a load in throng of life :
 One with another genders strife,
 To be alone yet is not good :
 I know but of one neighbourhood
 At peace and full—death's solitude.

Sleep soundly, dears, who lulled at
 last
 Forget the bird and all her pains,
 Forget the moon that waxes,
 wanes,
 The leaf, the sting, the frostful blast :
 Forget the troublous years that,
 past
 In strife or ache, did end at last.

We have clear call of daily bells,
 A dimness where the anthems are,
 A chancel vault of sky and star,
 A thunder if the organ swells :
 Alas our daily life—what else ?—
 Is not in tune with daily bells.

You have deep pause betwixt the
 chimes
 Of earth and heaven, a patient
 pause

Yet glad with rest by certain laws :
 You look and long : while oftentimes
 Precursive flush of morning climbs,
 And air vibrates with coming chimes.

6 August 1858.

FATHER AND LOVER

FATHER

IF underneath the water
 You comb your golden hair
 With a golden comb, my daughter,
 Oh would that I were there !
 If underneath the wave
 You fill a slimy grave,
 Would that I, who could not save,
 Might share.

LOVER

If my love Hero queens it
 In summer Fairyland,
 What would I be
 But the ring on her hand ?
 Her cheek when she leans it
 Would lean on me :—
 Or sweet, bitter-sweet,
 The flower that she wore
 When we parted, to meet
 On the hither shore
 Any more ? never more.

Circa 1858.

BY THE SEA

WHY does the sea moan evermore ?
 Shut out from heaven it makes its
 moan,
 It frets against the boundary shore :

All earth's full rivers cannot fill
The sea, that drinking thirsteth still.

Sheer miracles of loveliness

Lie hid in its unlooked-on bed :
Anemones, salt, passionless,
Blow flower-like—just enough alive
To blow and multiply and thrive.

Shells quaint with curve or spot or
spike,

Encrusted live things argus-eyed,
All fair alike yet all unlike,
Are born without a pang, and die
Without a pang, and so pass by.

11 November 1858.

WINTER RAIN

EVERY valley drinks,
Every dell and hollow ;
Where the kind rain sinks and sinks,
Green of Spring will follow.

Yet a lapse of weeks—
Buds will burst their edges,
Strip their wool-coats, glue-coats,
streaks,
In the woods and hedges ;

Weave a bower of love
For birds to meet each other,
Weave a canopy above
Nest and egg and mother.

But for fattening rain
We should have no flowers,
Never a bud or leaf again
But for soaking showers ;

Never a mated bird
In the rocking tree-tops,
Never indeed a flock or herd
To graze upon the lea-crops.

Lambs so woolly white,
Sheep the sun-bright leas on,
They could have no grass to bite
But for rain in season.

We should find no moss
In the shadiest places,
Find no waving meadow grass
Pied with broad-eyed daisies :

But miles of barren sand,
With never a son or daughter ;
Not a lily on the land,
Or lily on the water.

31 January 1859.

L. E. L.

'Whose heart was breaking for a little love.'

DOWNSTAIRS I laugh, I sport and
jest with all ;
But in my solitary room above
I turn my face in silence to the
wall ;

My heart is breaking for a little
love.

Though winter frosts are done,
And birds pair every one,
And leaves peep out, for springtide
is begun.

I feel no spring, while spring is
well-nigh blown,
I find no nest, while nests are in
the grove :

Woe's me for mine own heart that
dwells alone,
My heart that breaketh for a
little love.

While golden in the sun
Rivulets rise and run,
While lilies bud, for springtide is
begun.

All love, are loved, save only I ;
their hearts

Beat warm with love and joy,
beat full thereof :

They cannot guess, who play the
pleasant parts,

My heart is breaking for a little
love.

While bee-hives wake and
whirr,

And rabbit thins his fur,

In living spring that sets the world
astir.

I deck myself with silks and jewelry,
I plume myself like any mated
dove :

They praise my rustling show, and
never see

My heart is breaking for a little
love.

While sprouts green lavender

With rosemary and myrrh,

For in quick spring the sap is all
astir.

Perhaps some saints in glory guess
the truth,

Perhaps some angels read it as
they move,

And cry one to another full of ruth,
'Her heart is breaking for a little
love.'

Though other things have birth,

And leap and sing for mirth,

When springtime wakes and clothes
and feeds the earth.

Yet saith a saint, 'Take patience
for thy scathe' ;

Yet saith an angel : 'Wait, and
thou shalt prove

True best is last, true life is born of
death,

O thou, heart-broken for a little
love.

Then love shall fill thy girth,

And love make fat thy dearth,

When new spring builds new heaven
and clean new earth.'

15 February 1859.

SPRING

FROST-LOCKED all the winter,
Seeds, and roots, and stones of
fruits,

What shall make their sap ascend
That they may put forth shoots ?

Tips of tender green,

Leaf, or blade, or sheath ;

Telling of the hidden life

That breaks forth underneath,

Life nursed in its grave by Death.

Blows the thaw-wind pleasantly,

Drips the soaking rain,

By fits looks down the waking sun :

Young grass springs on the plain ;

Young leaves clothe early hedgerow
trees ;

Seeds, and roots, and stones of
fruits,

Swoln with sap put forth their
shoots ;

Curled-headed ferns sprout in the
lane ;

Birds sing and pair again.

There is no time like Spring,

When life's alive in everything,

Before new nestlings sing,

Before cleft swallows speed their
journey back

Along the trackless track—

God guides their wing,

He spreads their table that they
nothing lack,—

Before the daisy grows a common
flower,
Before the sun has power
To scorch the world up in his noon-
tide hour.

There is no time like Spring,
Like Spring that passes by ;
There is no life like Spring-life born
to die,—

Piercing the sod,
Clothing the uncouth clod,
Hatched in the nest,
Fledged on the windy bough,
Strong on the wing :
There is no time like Spring that
passes by,
Now newly born, and now
Hastening to die.

17 August 1859.

WHAT GOOD SHALL MY LIFE DO ME ?

No hope in life : yet is there hope
In death, the threshold of man's
scope.

Man yearneth (as the heliotrope

For ever seeks the sun) through
light,
Through dark, for Love : all, read
aright,
Is Love, for Love is infinite.

Shall not this infinite Love suffice
To feed thy dearth ? Lift heart and
eyes
Up to the hills, grow glad and wise.

The hills are glad because the sun
Kisses their round tops every one
Where silver fountains laugh and
run :

Smooth pebbles shine beneath : be-
side,
The grass, mere green, grows myriad-
eyed
With pomp of blossoms veined or
pied.

So every nest is glad whereon
The sun in tender strength has
shone :
So every fruit he glows upon :

So every valley depth, whose herds
At pasture praise him without words :
So the winged ecstasies of birds.

If there be any such thing, what
Is there by sunlight better not ?
Nothing except dead things that
rot.

Thou then who art not dead, and
fit,
Like blasted tree beside the pit,
But for the axe that levels it,

Living show life of Love, whereof
The force wields earth and heaven
above :

Who knows not Love begetteth
Love ?

Love in the gracious rain distils :
Love moves the subtle fountain-rills
To fertilize uplifted hills,

And seedful valleys fertilize :
Love stills the hungry lion's cries,
And the young raven satisfies :

Love hangs this earth in space :
Love rolls
Fair worlds rejoicing on their poles,
And girds them round with aureoles :

Love lights the sun : Love through
the dark
Lights the moon's evanescent arc :
Same Love lights up the glow-
worm's spark :

Love rears the great : Love tends
the small :
Breaks off the yoke, breaks down
the wall :
Accepteth all, fulfilleth all.

O ye who taste that Love is sweet,
Set waymarks for the doubtful feet
That stumble on in search of it.

Sing hymns of Love, that those who
hear

Far off in pain may lend an ear,
Rise up and wonder and draw near.

Lead lives of Love, that others who
Behold your lives may kindle too
With Love and cast their lots with
you.

27 August 1859.

COUSIN KATE

I WAS a cottage-maiden
Hardened by sun and air,
Contented with my cottage-mates,
Not mindful I was fair.
Why did a great lord find me out
And praise my flaxen hair ?
Why did a great lord find me out
To fill my heart with care ?

He lured me to his palace-home—
Woe's me for joy thereof—
To lead a shameless shameful life,
His plaything and his love.

He wore me like a golden knot,
He changed me like a glove :
So now I moan an unclean thing
Who might have been a dove.

O Lady Kate, my Cousin Kate,
You grew more fair than I :
He saw you at your father's gate,
Chose you and cast me by.
He watched your steps along the lane,
Your sport among the rye :
He lifted you from mean estate
To sit with him on high.

Because you were so good and pure
He bound you with his ring :
The neighbours call you good and
pure,
Call me an outcast thing.
Even so I sit and howl in dust,
You sit in gold and sing :
Now which of us has tenderer heart?
You had the stronger wing.

O Cousin Kate, my love was true,
Your love was writ in sand :
If he had fooled not me but you,
If you stood where I stand,
He had not won me with his love
Nor bought me with his land :
I would have spit into his face
And not have taken his hand.

Yet I've a gift you have not got
And seem not like to get :
For all your clothes and wedding-
ring
I've little doubt you fret.
My fair-haired son, my shame, my
pride,
Cling closer, closer yet :
Your sire would give broad lands for
one
To wear his coronet.
18 November 1859.

SISTER MAUDE

WHO told my mother of my shame,
 Who told my father of my dear?
 Oh who but Maude, my sister Maude,
 Who lurked to spy and peer.

Cold he lies, as cold as stone,
 With his clotted curls about his
 face:
 The comeliest corpse in all the world
 And worthy of a queen's embrace.

You might have spared his soul,
 sister,
 Have spared my soul, your own
 soul too:
 Though I had not been born at all,
 He'd never have looked at you.

My father may sleep in Paradise,
 My mother at Heaven-gate:
 But sister Maude shall get no sleep
 Either early or late.

My father may wear a golden gown,
 My mother a crown may win;
 If my dear and I knocked at Heaven-
 gate
 Perhaps they'd let us in:
 But sister Maude, O sister Maude,
 Bide *you* with death and sin.
Circa 1860.

NOBLE SISTERS

'Now did you mark a falcon,
 Sister dear, sister dear,
 Flying toward my window
 In the morning cool and clear?
 With jingling bells about her neck,
 But what beneath her wing?

It may have been a ribbon,
 Or it may have been a ring.'—
 'I marked a falcon swooping
 At the break of day:
 And for your love, my sister
 dove,
 I 'frayed the thief away.'—

'Or did you spy a ruddy hound,
 Sister fair and tall,
 Went snuffing round my garden
 bound,
 Or crouched by my bower wall?
 With a silken leash about his neck;
 But in his mouth may be
 A chain of gold and silver links,
 Or a letter writ to me.'—
 'I heard a hound, highborn
 sister,
 Stood baying at the moon:
 I rose and drove him from
 your wall
 Lest you should wake too
 soon.'—

'Or did you meet a pretty page
 Sat swinging on the gate?
 Sat whistling whistling like a bird,
 Or may be slept too late:
 With eaglets broidered on his cap,
 And eaglets on his glove.
 If you had turned his pockets out,
 You had found some pledge of
 love.'—
 'I met him at this daybreak,
 Scarce the east was red:
 Lest the creaking gate should
 anger you
 I packed him home to
 bed.'—

'Oh patience, sister! Did you see
 A young man tall and strong,
 Swift-footed to uphold the right
 And to uproot the wrong,

Come home across the desolate sea
To woo me for his wife?
And in his heart my heart is locked,
And in his life my life.'—

'I met a nameless man, sister,
Who loitered round our
door:

I said: Her husband loves
her much
And yet she loves him
more.'—

'Fie, sister, fie, a wicked lie,
A lie, a wicked lie!

I have none other love but him,
Nor will have till I die.
And you have turned him from our
door,

And stabbed him with a lie:
I will go seek him thro' the world
In sorrow till I die.'—

'Go seek in sorrow, sister,
And find in sorrow too:
If thus you shame our father's
name

My curse go forth with
you.'

Towards January 1860.

'NO, THANK YOU, JOHN'

I NEVER said I loved you, John;
Why will you tease me day by
day,

And wax a weariness to think upon
With always 'do' and 'pray'?

You know I never loved you, John;
No fault of mine made me your
toast:

Why will you haunt me with a face
as wan
As shows an hour-old ghost?

I dare say Meg or Moll would take
Pity upon you, if you'd ask:
And pray don't remain single for
my sake
Who can't perform that task.

I have no heart?—Perhaps I have
not;

But then you're mad to take
offence

That I don't give you what I have
not got:

Use your own common sense.

Let bygones be bygones:

Don't call me false, who owed
not to be true:

I'd rather answer 'No' to fifty
Johns

Than answer 'Yes' to you.

Let's mar our pleasant days no
more,

Song-birds of passage, days of
youth:

Catch at to-day, forget the days
before;

I'll wink at your untruth.

Let us strike hands as hearty
friends;

No more, no less; and friend-
ship's good:

Only don't keep in view ulterior
ends,

And points not understood

In open treaty. Rise above
Quibbles and shuffling off and
on.

Here's friendship for you if you
like; but love,—

No, thank you, John.

27 March 1860.

MIRAGE

THE hope I dreamed of was a
dream,
Was but a dream; and now I
wake,
Exceeding comfortless, and worn,
and old,
For a dream's sake.

I hang my harp upon a tree,
A weeping willow in a lake;
I hang my silenced harp there,
wrung and snapt
For a dream's sake.

Lie still, lie still, my breaking
heart;
My silent heart, lie still and
break:
Life, and the world, and mine own
self, are changed
For a dream's sake.
12 June 1860.

THE LAMBS OF GRASMERE,
1860

THE upland flocks grew starved and
thinned:
Their shepherds scarce could feed
the lambs
Whose milkless mothers butted them,
Or who were orphaned of their
dams.
The lambs athirst for mother's milk
Filled all the place with piteous
sounds:
Their mothers' bones made white
for miles
The pastureless wet pasture
grounds.

Day after day, night after night,
From lamb to lamb the shepherds
went,
With teapots for the bleating mouths,
Instead of nature's nourishment.
The little shivering gaping things
Soon knew the step that brought
them aid,
And fondled the protecting hand,
And rubbed it with a woolly head.

Then, as the days waxed on to weeks,
It was a pretty sight to see
These lambs with frisky heads and
tails
Skipping and leaping on the lea,
Bleating in tender trustful tones,
Resting on rocky crag or mound,
And following the beloved feet
That once had sought for them
and found.

These very shepherds of their flocks,
These loving lambs so meek to
please,
Are worthy of recording words
And honour in their due degrees:
So I might live a hundred years,
And roam from strand to foreign
strand,
Yet not forget this flooded spring
And scarce-saved lambs of West-
moreland.
24 July 1860.

PROMISES LIKE PIE-CRUST

PROMISE me no promises,
So will I not promise you:
Keep we both our liberties,
Never false and never true:
Let us hold the die uncast,
Free to come as free to go:

For I cannot know your past,
And of mine what can you know ?

You, so warm, may once have been
Warmer towards another one :
I, so cold, may once have seen
Sunlight, once have felt the sun :
Who shall show us if it was
Thus indeed in time of old ?
Fades the image from the glass,
And the fortune is not told.

If you promised, you might grieve
For lost liberty again :
If I promised, I believe
I should fret to break the chain.
Let us be the friends we were,
Nothing more but nothing less :
Many thrive on frugal fare
Who would perish of excess.

20 April 1861.

WIFE TO HUSBAND

PARDON the faults in me,
For the love of years ago :
Good-bye.
I must drift across the sea,
I must sink into the snow,
I must die.

You can bask in this sun,
You can drink wine, and eat :
Good-bye.
I must gird myself and run,
Though with unready feet :
I must die.

Blank sea to sail upon,
Cold bed to sleep in :
Good-bye.
While you clasp, I must be gone
For all your weeping :
I must die.

A kiss for one friend,
And a word for two,—
Good-bye :—
A lock that you must send,
A kindness you must do :
I must die.

Not a word for you,
Not a lock or kiss,
Good-bye.
We, one, must part in two ;
Verily death is this :
I must die.

8 June 1861.

BETTER SO

FAST asleep, mine own familiar
friend,
Fast asleep at last :
Though the pain was strong,
Though the struggle long,
It is past :
All thy pangs are at an end.

Whilst I weep, whilst death-bells
toll,
Thou art fast asleep,
With idle hands upon thy breast
And heart at rest :
Whilst I weep
Angels sing around thy singing soul.

I would not speak the word if I could
raise
My dead to life :
I would not speak
If I could flush thy cheek
And rouse thy pulses' strife
And send thy feet on the once-trodden
ways.

13 December 1861.

OUR WIDOWED QUEEN

THE Husband of the widow care
for her,
The Father of the fatherless :
The faithful Friend, the abiding
Comforter,
Watch over her to bless.

Full twenty years of blameless
married faith,
Of love and honour questioned
not,
Joys, griefs imparted : for the first
time Death
Sunders the common lot.

Christ help the desolate Queen upon
her throne,
Strengthen her hands, confirm
her heart :
For she henceforth must bear a load
alone
Borne until now in part.

Christ help the desolate Woman in
her home,
Broken of heart, indeed bereft :
Shrinking from solitary days to come,
Beggared though much is left.

Rise up, O Sons and Daughters of
the Dead,
Weep with your Mother where
she weeps :
Yet not as sorrowing without hope
be shed
Your tears : he only sleeps.

Rise up, O Sons and Daughters of
the realm,
In pale reflected sorrow move :
Revere the widowed hand that holds
the helm,
Love her with double love.

In royal patience of her soul possess
May she fulfil her length of days :
Then may her children rise and call
her blest,
Then may her Husband praise.
16 December 1861.

IN PROGRESS

TEN years ago it seemed impossible
That she should ever grow so
calm as this,
With self-remembrance in her
warmest kiss
And dim dried eyes like an exhausted
well.
Slow-speaking when she has some
fact to tell,
Silent with long-unbroken silences,
Centred in self yet not unpleased
to please,
Gravely monotonous like a passing
bell.
Mindful of drudging daily common
things,
Patient at pastime, patient at her
work,
Wearied perhaps but strenuous
certainly.
Sometimes I fancy we may one
day see
Her head shoot forth seven stars
from where they lurk
And her eyes lightnings and her
shoulders wings.
31 March 1862.

ON THE WING

ONCE in a dream (for once I dreamed
of you)
We stood together in an open
field ;

Above our heads two swift-winged
 pigeons wheeled,
 Sporting at ease and courting full
 in view :—
 When loftier still a broadening dark-
 ness flew,
 Down-swooping, and a ravenous
 hawk revealed ;
 Too weak to fight, too fond to fly,
 they yield ;
 So farewell life and love and
 pleasures new.
 Then as their plumes fell fluttering
 to the ground,
 Their snow-white plumage flecked
 with crimson drops,
 I wept, and thought I turned
 towards you to weep :
 But you were gone ; while rust-
 ling hedgerow tops
 Bent in a wind which bore to me a
 sound
 Of far-off piteous bleat of lambs
 and sheep.

17 December 1862.

SONG

Two doves upon the selfsame
 branch,
 Two lilies on a single stem,
 Two butterflies upon one flower :—
 Oh happy they who look on them !

Who look upon them hand in
 hand
 Flushed in the rosy summer light ;
 Who look upon them hand in hand,
 And never give a thought to
 night.

Before 1863.

R

THE QUEEN OF HEARTS

How comes it, Flora, that, when-
 ever we
 Play cards together, you invariably,
 However the pack parts,
 Still hold the Queen of Hearts?

I've scanned you with a scrutinizing
 gaze,
 Resolved to fathom these your secret
 ways :
 But, sift them as I will,
 Your ways are secret still.

I cut and shuffle ; shuffle, cut, again ;
 But all my cutting, shuffling, proves
 in vain :
 Vain hope, vain forethought too ;
 That Queen still falls to you.

I dropped her once, prepense ; but,
 ere the deal
 Was dealt, your instinct seemed her
 loss to feel :
 'There should be one card
 more,'
 You said, and searched the
 floor.

I cheated once ; I made a private
 notch
 In Heart-Queen's back, and kept a
 lynx-eyed watch ;
 Yet such another back
 Deceived me in the pack :

The Queen of Clubs assumed by
 arts unknown
 An imitative dint that seemed my
 own ;
 This notch, not of my doing,
 Misled me to my ruin.

2 A

It baffles me to puzzle out the clue,
Which must be skill, or craft, or
 luck in you :

Unless, indeed, it be
Natural affinity.

3 January 1863.

SEASONS

OH the cheerful Budding-time !

When thorn-hedges turn to green,
When new leaves of elm and lime
Cleave and shed their winter
screen ;

Tender lambs are born and baa,
North wind finds no snow to bring,
Vigorous Nature laughs ' Ha ha ! '
In the miracle of Spring.

Oh the gorgeous Blossom-days !

When broad flag-flowers drink
and blow ;
In and out in Summer-blaze
Dragon-flies flash to and fro ;
Ashen branches hang out keys ;
Oaks put forth the rosy shoot,
Wandering herds wax sleek at ease,
Lovely blossoms end in fruit.

Oh the shouting Harvest-weeks !

Mother Earth grown fat with
sheaves ;
Thrifty gleaner finds who seeks ;
Russet-golden pomp of leaves
Crowns the woods, to fall at length ;
Bracing winds are felt to stir,
Ocean gathers up her strength,
Beasts renew their dwindled fur.

Oh the starving Winter lapse !

Ice-bound, hunger-pinched, and
dim ;
Dormant roots recall their saps,

Empty nests show black and
grim.

Short-lived sunshine gives no heat,
Undue buds are nipped by frost,
Snow sets forth a winding-sheet,
And all hope of life seems lost.

20 January 1863.

JUNE

COME, cuckoo, come :

Come again, swift swallow :
Come and welcome ! when you come
Summer's sure to follow :
June the month of months
Flowers and fruitage brings too,
When green trees spread shadiest
boughs,
When each wild bird sings too.

May is scant and crude,
Generous June is riper :

Birds fall silent in July,
June has its woodland piper :
Rocks upon the maple-tops
Homely-hearted linnet,
Full in hearing of his nest
And the dear ones in it.

If the year would stand
Still at June for ever,
With no further growth on land
Nor further flow of river,
If all nights were shortest nights
And longest days were all the seven,
This might be a merrier world
To my mind to live in.

5 February 1863.

A RING POSY

JESS and Jill are pretty girls,
Plump and well to do,

In a cloud of windy curls :
 Yet I know who
 Loves me more than curls or pearls.

I'm not pretty, not a bit—
 Thin and sallow-pale ;
 When I trudge along the street
 I don't need a veil :
 Yet I have one fancy hit.

Jess and Jill can trill and sing
 With a flute-like voice,
 Dance as light as bird on wing,
 Laugh for careless joys :
 Yet it's I who wear the ring.

Jess and Jill will mate some day,
 Surely, surely :
 Ripen on to June through May,
 While the sun shines make their
 hay—

Slacken steps demurely :
 Yet even there I lead the way.

20 February 1863.

HELEN GREY

BECAUSE one loves you, Helen Grey,
 Is that a reason you should pout,
 And like a March wind veer about,
 And frown, and say your shrewish
 say ?

Don't strain the cord until it snaps,
 Don't split the sound heart with
 your wedge,

Don't cut your fingers with the
 edge

Of your keen wit ; you may perhaps.

Because you're handsome, Helen
 Grey,

Is that a reason to be proud ?

Your eyes are bold, your laugh is
 loud,

Your steps go mincing on their way ;

But so you miss that modest charm
 Which is the surest charm of all ;
 Take heed, you yet may trip and
 fall,

And no man care to stretch his arm.

Stoop from your cold height, Helen
 Grey,

Come down, and take a lowlier
 place,

Come down, to fill it now with
 grace ;

Come down you must perforce some
 day :

For years cannot be kept at bay,
 And fading years will make you
 old ;

Then in their turn will men seem
 cold,

When you yourself are nipped and
 grey.

23 February 1863.

A YEAR'S WINDFALLS

ON the wind of January
 Down flits the snow,
 Travelling from the frozen North
 As cold as it can blow.

Poor robin redbreast,
 Look where he comes ;
 Let him in to feel your fire,
 And toss him of your crumbs.

On the wind in February
 Snowflakes float still,
 Half inclined to turn to rain,
 Nipping, dripping, chill.
 Then the thaws swell the streams,
 And swollen rivers swell the
 sea :

If the winter ever ends,
 How pleasant it will be !

In the wind of windy March
The catkins drop down,
Curly, caterpillar-like,
Curious green and brown.
With concourse of nest-building birds
And leaf-buds by the way,
We begin to think of flowers
And life and nuts some day.

With the gusts of April
Rich fruit-tree blossoms fall,
On the hedged-in orchard-green,
From the southern wall.
Apple-trees and pear-trees
Shed petals white or pink,
Plum-trees and peach-trees ;
While sharp showers sink and sink.

Little brings the May breeze
Beside pure scent of flowers,
While all things wax and nothing
waned

In lengthening daylight hours.
Across the hyacinth beds
The wind lags warm and sweet,
Across the hawthorn tops,
Across the blades of wheat.

In the wind of sunny June
Thrives the red rose crop,
Every day fresh blossoms blow
While the first leaves drop ;
White rose and yellow rose
And moss rose choice to find,
And the cottage cabbage-rose
Not one whit behind.

On the blast of scorched July
Drives the pelting hail
From thunderous lightning-clouds
that blot
Blue heaven grown lurid-pale.
Weedy waves are tossed ashore ;
Sea-things strange to sight

Gasp upon the barren shore
And fade away in light.

In the parching August wind
Corn-fields bow the head,
Sheltered in round valley depths,
On low hills outspread.
Early leaves drop loitering down
Weightless on the breeze,
First fruits of the year's decay
From the withering trees.

In brisk wind of September
The heavy-headed fruits
Shake upon their bending boughs
And drop from the shoots ;
Some glow golden in the sun,
Some show green and streaked,
Some set forth a purple bloom,
Some blush rosy-cheeked.

In strong blast of October
At the equinox,
Stirred up in his hollow bed
Broad ocean rocks ;
Plunge the ships on his bosom,
Leaps and plunges the foam,—
It's oh for mothers' sons at sea,
That they were safe at home !

In slack wind of November
The fog forms and shifts ;
All the world comes out again
When the fog lifts.
Loosened from their sapless twigs,
Leaves drop with every gust ;
Drifting, rustling, out of sight
In the damp or dust.

Last of all, December,
The year's sands nearly run,
Speeds on the shortest day,
Curtails the sun ;

With its bleak raw wind
Lays the last leaves low,
Brings back the nightly frosts,
Brings back the snow.

26 February 1863.

A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW

'CROAK, croak, croak,'
Thus the Raven spoke,
Perched on his crooked tree,
As hoarse as hoarse could be.
Shun him and fear him,
Lest the Bridegroom hear him ;
Scout him and rout him
With his ominous eye about him.

Yet 'Croak, croak, croak,'
Still tolled from the oak,
From that fatal black bird,
Whether heard or unheard :
'O ship upon the high seas,
Freighted with lives and spices,
Sink, O ship,' croaked the Raven :
'Let the Bride mount to heaven.'

In a far foreign land
Upon the wave-edged sand,
Some friends gaze wistfully
Across the glittering sea.
'If we could clasp our sister,'
Three say, 'now we have missed her !'
'If we could kiss our daughter !'
Two sigh across the water.

Oh the ship sails fast
With silken flags at the mast,
And the home-wind blows soft.
But a Raven sits aloft,
Chuckling and choking,
Croaking, croaking, croaking.
Let the beacon-fire blaze higher ;
Bridegroom, watch ; the Bride draws
nigher.

On a sloped sandy beach,
Which the spring-tide billows reach,
Stand a watchful throng
Who have hoped and waited long :
'Fie on this ship that tarries
With the priceless freight it carries !
The time seems long and longer :
O languid wind, wax stronger ;'—

Whilst the Raven perched at ease
Still croaks and does not cease,
One monotonous note
Tolled from his iron throat :
'No father, no mother,
But I have a sable brother :
He sees where ocean flows to,
And he knows what he knows too.'

A day and a night
They kept watch worn and white ;
A night and a day
For the swift ship on its way :
For the Bride and her maidens—
Clear chimes the bridal cadence—
For the tall ship that never
Hove in sight for ever.

On either shore, some
Stand in grief loud or dumb
As the dreadful dread
Grows certain though unsaid.
For laughter there is weeping,
And waking instead of sleeping,
And a desperate sorrow
Morrow after morrow.

Oh who knows the truth ?
How she perished in her youth,
And like a queen went down
Pale in her royal crown :
How she went up to glory
From the sea-foam chill and hoary,
From the sea-depth black and riven
To the calm that is in Heaven.

They went down, all the crew,
 The silks and spices too,
 The great ones and the small,
 One and all, one and all.
 Was it through stress of weather,
 Quicksands, rocks, or all together?
 Only the Raven knows this,
 And he will not disclose this.—

After a day and a year
 The bridal bell chimes clear;
 After a year and a day
 The Bridegroom is brave and gay.
 Love is sound, faith is rotten:
 The old Bride is forgotten:—
 Two ominous Ravens only
 Remember, black and lonely.

4 March 1863.

A DUMB FRIEND

I PLANTED a young tree when I was
 young:
 But now the tree is grown and I
 am old:
 There wintry robin shelters from the
 cold
 And tunes his silver tongue.

A green and living tree I planted it,
 A glossy-foliaged tree of evergreen:
 All through the noontide heat it
 spread a screen
 Whereunder I might sit.

But now I only watch it where it
 towers:
 I, sitting at my window, watch it tost
 By rattling gale or silvered by the
 frost;
 Or, when sweet summer
 flowers,

Wagging its round green head with
 stately grace
 In tender winds that kiss it and go
 by.
 It shows a green full age: and what
 show I?
 A faded wrinkled face.

So often have I watched it, till mine
 eyes
 Have filled with tears and I have
 ceased to see,
 That now it seems a very friend to
 me,
 In all my secrets wise.

A faithful pleasant friend, who year
 by year
 Grew with my growth and strength-
 ened with my strength,
 But whose green lifetime shows a
 longer length:
 When I shall not sit here

It still will bud in spring, and shed
 rare leaves
 In autumn, and in summer-heat give
 shade,
 And warmth in winter: when my
 bed is made
 In shade the cypress weaves.

24 March 1863.

LIFE AND DEATH

LIFE is not sweet. One day it will
 be sweet
 To shut our eyes and die;
 Nor feel the wild flowers blow, nor
 birds dart by
 With flitting butterfly,
 Nor grass grow long above our
 heads and feet,

Nor hear the happy lark that soars
sky-high,
Nor sigh that spring is fleet and
summer fleet,
Nor mark the waxing wheat,
Nor know who sits in our accustomed
seat.

Life is not good. One day it will be
good
To die, then live again ;
To sleep meanwhile ; so, not to feel
the wane
Of shrunk leaves dropping in
the wood,
Nor hear the foamy lashing of the
main,
Nor mark the blackened bean-fields,
nor, where stood
Rich ranks of golden grain,
Only dead refuse stubble clothe the
plain :
Asleep from risk, asleep from
pain.

24 April 1863.

TWILIGHT NIGHT

I

WE met hand to hand,
We clasped hands close and fast,
As close as oak and ivy stand :
But it is past ;
Come day, come night, day comes
at last.

We loosed hand from hand,
We parted face from face :
Each went his way to his own land
At his own pace,
Each went to fill his separate
place.

If we should meet one day,
If both should not forget,
We shall clasp hands the accustomed
way,
As when we met,
So long ago, as I remember yet.
26 August 1864.

II

Where my heart is (wherever that
may be)
Might I but follow !
If you fly thither over heath and lea,
O honey-seeking bee,
O careless swallow,
Bid some for whom I watch keep
watch for me.

Alas that we must dwell, my heart
and I,
So far asunder !
Hours wax to days, and days and
days creep by ;
I watch with wistful eye,
I wait and wonder :
When will that day draw nigh—that
hour draw nigh ?

Not yesterday, and not I think to-day ;
Perhaps to-morrow.
Day after day 'To-morrow' thus I
say :
I watched so yesterday
In hope and sorrow,
Again to-day I watch the accustomed
way.
25 June 1863.

THE POOR GHOST

'OH whence do you come, my dear
friend, to me,
With your golden hair all fallen
below your knee,

And your face as white as snowdrops
on the lea,
And your voice as hollow as the
hollow sea ?'

'From the other world I come back
to you ;
My locks are uncurled with dripping
drenching dew.
You know the old, whilst I know the
new :
But to-morrow you shall know this
too.'

'Oh not to-morrow into the dark, I
pray ;
Oh not to-morrow, too soon to go
away :
Here I feel warm and well-content
and gay :
Give me another year, another day.'

'Am I so changed in a day and a
night
That mine own only love shrinks
from me with fright,
Is fain to turn away to left or right
And cover up his eyes from the
sight ?'

'Indeed I loved you, my chosen
friend,
I loved you for life, but life has an
end ;
Through sickness I was ready to
tend :
But death mars all, which we cannot
mend.

'Indeed I loved you ; I love you yet,
If you will stay where your bed is
set,
Where I have planted a violet,
Which the wind waves, which the
dew makes wet.'

'Life is gone, then love too is gone,
It was a reed that I leant upon :
Never doubt I will leave you alone
And not wake you rattling bone
with bone.

'I go home alone to my bed,
Dug deep at the foot and deep at
the head,
Roofed in with a load of lead,
Warm enough for the forgotten dead.

'But why did your tears soak through
the clay,
And why did your sobs wake me
where I lay ?
I was away, far enough away :
Let me sleep now till the Judgment
Day.'

25 July 1863.

MARGERY

WHAT shall we do with Margery ?
She lies and cries upon her bed,
All lily-pale from foot to head ;
Her heart is sore as sore can be :
Poor guileless shamefaced Margery.

A foolish girl, to love a man
And let him know she loved him
so !
She should have tried a different
plan :
Have loved, but not have let him
know :
Then he perhaps had loved her so.

What can we do with Margery
Who has no relish for her food ?
We'd take her with us to the sea—
Across the sea—but where's the
good ?
She'd fret alike on land and sea.

Yes, what the neighbours say is true :
Girls should not make themselves
so cheap.

But now it's done what can we do ?
I hear her moaning in her sleep,
Moaning and sobbing in her sleep.

I think—and I'm of flesh and
blood—

Were I that man for whom she
cares,

I would not cost her tears and
prayers

To leave her just alone like mud,
Fretting her simple heart with
cares.

A year ago she was a child,
Now she's a woman in her grief :
The year's now at the falling leaf ;
At budding of the leaves she smiled :
Poor foolish harmless foolish child.

It was her own fault ? so it was.
If every own fault found us out,
Dogged us and snared us round-
about,

What comfort should we take because
Not half our due we thus wrung
out ?

At any rate the question stands :
What now to do with Margery,
A weak poor creature on our hands ?
Something we must do : I'll not
see

Her blossom fade, sweet Margery.

Perhaps a change may after all
Prove best for her : to leave
behind

These home-sights seen time out
of mind ;

To get beyond the narrow wall
Of home, and learn home is not all.

Perhaps this way she may forget,
Not all at once, but in a while :
May come to wonder how she set
Her heart on this slight thing,
and smile
At her own folly, in a while.

Yet this I say and I maintain :
Were I the man she's fretting for,
I should my very self abhor
If I could leave her to her pain,
Uncomforted to tears and pain.

1 October 1863.

LAST NIGHT

WHERE were you last night ? I
watched at the gate ;
I went down early, I stayed down
late.

Were you snug at home, I
should like to know,
Or were you in the coppice wheed-
ling Kate ?

She's a fine girl, with a fine clear
skin ;
Easy to woo, perhaps not hard to
win.

Speak up like a man and tell
me the truth :
I'm not one to grow downhearted
and thin.

If you love her best, speak up
like a man ;
It's not I will stand in the light
of your plan :
Some girls might cry and scold
you a bit,
And say they couldn't bear it ; but
I can.

Love was pleasant enough, and
the days went fast ;
Pleasant while it lasted, but it needn't
last ;

Awhile on the wax, and awhile
on the wane,
Now dropped away into the past.

Was it pleasant to you? To me
it was :

Now clean gone as an image from
glass,

As a goodly rainbow that fades
away,
As dew that steams upward from
the grass ;

As the first spring day or the last
summer day,

As the sunset flush that leaves
heaven grey,
As a flame burnt out for lack of
oil,

Which no pains relight or ever
may.

Good luck to Kate and good luck
to you :

I guess she'll be kind when you
come to woo.

I wish her a pretty face that
will last,

I wish her a husband steady and
true.

Hate you? not I, my very good
friend ;

All things begin and all have an
end.

But let broken be broken ; I
put no faith

In quacks who set up to patch
and mend.

Just my love and one word to
Kate—

Not to let time slip if she means
to mate ;

For even such a thing has been
known

As to miss the chance while we
weigh and wait.

November 1863.

SOMEWHERE OR OTHER

SOMEWHERE or other there must
surely be

The face not seen, the voice not
heard,

The heart that not yet—never yet
—ah me !

Made answer to my word.

Somewhere or other, may be near
or far ;

Past land and sea, clean out of
sight ;

Beyond the wandering moon, beyond
the star

That tracks her night by night.

Somewhere or other, may be far or
near ;

With just a wall, a hedge, be-
tween ;

With just the last leaves of the
dying year

Fallen on a turf grown green.

Towards November 1863.

A CHILL

WHAT can lambkins do
All the keen night through?
Nestle by their woolly mother
The careful ewe.

What can nestlings do
In the nightly dew?
Sleep beneath their mother's wing
Till day breaks anew.

If in field or tree
There might only be
Such a warm soft sleeping-place
Found for me!

Towards December 1863.

SUMMER

WINTER is cold-hearted,
Spring is yea and nay,
Autumn is a weathercock
Blown every way.
Summer days for me
When every leaf is on its tree;

When Robin's not a beggar,
And Jenny Wren's a bride,
And larks hang singing, singing,
singing,

Over the wheat-fields wide,
And anchored lilies ride,
And the pendulum spider
Swings from side to side;

And blue-black beetles transact
business,

And gnats fly in a host,
And furry caterpillars hasten
That no time be lost,
And moths grow fat and thrive,
And ladybirds arrive.

Before green apples blush,
Before green nuts embrown,
Why one day in the country
Is worth a month in town;
Is worth a day and a year
Of the dusty, musty, lag-last fashion
That days drone elsewhere.

15 January 1864.

BEAUTY IS VAIN

WHILE roses are so red,
While lilies are so white,
Shall a woman exalt her face
Because it gives delight?
She's not so sweet as a rose,
A lily's straighter than she,
And if she were as red or white
She'd be but one of three.

Whether she flush in love's summer
Or in its winter grow pale,
Whether she flaunt her beauty
Or hide it away in a veil,
Be she red or white
And stand she erect or bowed,
Time will win the race he runs with
her,
And hide her away in a shroud.

20 January 1864.

WHAT WOULD I GIVE!

WHAT would I give for a heart of
flesh to warm me through,
Instead of this heart of stone ice-
cold whatever I do!
Hard and cold and small, of all
hearts the worst of all.

What would I give for words, it
only words would come!
But now in its misery my spirit has
fallen dumb.
O merry friends, go your way, I
have never a word to say.

What would I give for tears! not
smiles but scalding tears,
To wash the black mark clean, and
to thaw the frost of years,
To wash the stain ingrain, and to
make me clean again.

28 January 1864.

THE GHOST'S PETITION

'THERE'S a footstep coming ; look
out and see.'—

'The leaves are falling, the wind
is calling ;
No one cometh across the lea.'—

'There's a footstep coming ; O
sister, look.'—

'The ripple flashes, the white
foam dashes ;
No one cometh across the brook.'—

'But he promised that he would
come :

To-night, to-morrow, in joy or
sorrow,
He must keep his word, and must
come home.

'For he promised that he would
come :

His word was given ; from earth
or heaven,
He must keep his word, and must
come home.

'Go to sleep, my sweet sister Jane ;
You can slumber, who need not
number

Hour after hour, in doubt and pain.

'I shall sit here awhile, and watch ;
Listening, hoping, for one hand
groping
In deep shadow to find the latch.'

After the dark and before the light,
One lay sleeping ; and one sat
weeping,
Who had watched and wept the
weary night.

After the night and before the day,
One lay sleeping ; and one sat
weeping—

Watching, weeping for one away.

There came a footstep climbing the
stair ;

Some one standing out on the
landing

Shook the door like a puff of air—

Shook the door and in he passed.

Did he enter? In the room centre
Stood her husband : the door shut
fast.

'O Robin, but you are cold—

Chilled with the night-dew : so
lily-white you

Look like a stray lamb from our fold.

'O Robin, but you are late :

Come and sit near me—sit here
and cheer me.'—
(Blue the flame burnt in the grate.)

'Lay not down your head on my
breast :

I cannot hold you, kind wife, nor
fold you

In the shelter that you love best.

'Feel not after my clasping hand :

I am but a shadow, come from
the meadow

Where many lie, but no tree can
stand.

'We are trees which have shed their
leaves :

Our heads lie low there, but no
tears flow there ;

Only I grieve for my wife who
grieves.

'I could rest if you would not moan
Hour after hour; I have no power
To shut my ears where I lie alone.

'I could rest if you would not cry;
But there's no sleeping while you
sit weeping—
Watching, weeping so bitterly.'—

'Woe's me! woe's me! for this I
have heard.
Oh night of sorrow!—oh black
to-morrow!
Is it thus that you keep your word?

'O you who used so to shelter me
Warm from the least wind—why,
now the east wind
Is warmer than you, whom I quake
to see.

'O my husband of flesh and blood,
For whom my mother I left, and
brother,
And all I had, accounting it good,

'What do you do there, underground,
In the dark hollow? I'm fain to
follow.

What do you do there?—what have
you found?'—

'What I do there I must not tell:
But I have plenty; kind wife,
content ye:
It is well with us—it is well.

'Tender hand hath made our nest;
Our fear is ended, our hope is
blended
With present pleasure, and we have
rest.'

'Oh but Robin, I'm fain to come,
If your present days are so
pleasant,
For my days are so wearisome.

'Yet I'll dry my tears for your sake:
Why should I tease you, who
cannot please you
Any more with the pains I take?'
7 April 1864.

HOPING AGAINST HOPE

If he would come to-day, to-day,
to-day,
Oh what a day to-day would be!
But now he's away, miles and miles
away
From me across the sea.

O little bird, flying, flying, flying
To your nest in the warm west,
Tell him as you pass that I am dying,
As you pass home to your nest.

I have a sister, I have a brother,
A faithful hound, a tame white
dove;
But I had another, once I had
another,
And I miss him, my love, my love!

In this weary world it is so cold, so
cold,
While I sit here all alone;
I would not like to wait and to grow
old,
But just to be dead and gone.

Make me fair when I lie dead on
my bed,
Fair where I am lying:
Perhaps he may come and look upon
me dead—
He for whom I am dying.

Dig my grave for two, with a stone
to show it,
And on the stone write my
name:

If he never comes, I shall never
know it,
But sleep on all the same.
12 April 1864.

SUNSHINE

'THERE'S little sunshine in my heart,
Slack to spring, lead to sink :
There's little sunshine in the world,
I think.'

'There's glow of sunshine in my
heart
(Cool wind, cool the glow):
There's flood of sunshine in the
world,
I know.'

Now if of these one spoke the truth,
One spoke more or less :
But which was which I will not tell :
You guess.
31 May 1864.

MEETING

If we shall live, we live :
If we shall die, we die :
If we live we shall meet again :
But to-night, good-bye.
One word, let but one be heard—
What, not one word ?

If we sleep we shall wake again
And see to-morrow's light :
If we wake, we shall meet again :
But to-night, good-night.
Good-night, my lost and
found—
Still not a sound ?

If we live, we must part :
If we die, we part in pain :
If we die, we shall part
Only to meet again.
By those tears on either cheek,
To-morrow you will speak.

To meet, worth living for :
Worth dying for, to meet.
To meet, worth parting for :
Bitter forgot in sweet.
To meet, worth parting before,
Never to part more.

11 June 1864.

TWICE

I TOOK my heart in my hand,
(O my love, O my love),
I said : Let me fall or stand,
Let me live or die,
But this once hear me speak—
(O my love, O my love)—
Yet a woman's words are weak ;
You should speak, not I.

You took my heart in your hand
With a friendly smile,
With a critical eye you scanned,
Then set it down,
And said : It is still unripe,
Better wait awhile ;
Wait while the skylarks pipe,
Till the corn grows brown.

As you set it down it broke—
Broke, but I did not wince ;
I smiled at the speech you spoke,
At your judgment that I heard :
But I have not often smiled
Since then, nor questioned since,
Nor cared for corn-flowers wild,
Nor sung with the singing bird.

I take my heart in my hand,
 O my God, O my God,
 My broken heart in my hand :
 Thou hast seen, judge Thou.
 My hope was written on sand,
 O my God, O my God :
 Now let Thy judgment stand—
 Yea, judge me now.

This contemned of a man,
 This marred one heedless day,
 This heart take Thou to scan
 Both within and without :
 Refine with fire its gold,
 Purge Thou its dross away—
 Yea hold it in Thy hold,
 Whence none can pluck it out.

I take my heart in my hand—
 I shall not die, but live—
 Before Thy face I stand ;
 I, for Thou callest such :
 All that I have I bring,
 All that I am I give ;
 Smile Thou and I shall sing,
 But shall not question much.

June 1864.

A FARM WALK

THE year stood at its equinox
 And bluff the North was blowing,
 A bleat of lambs came from the
 flocks,
 Green hardy things were growing ;
 I met a maid with shining locks
 Where milky kine were lowing.

She wore a kerchief on her neck,
 Her bare arm showed its dimple,
 Her apron spread without a speck,
 Her air was frank and simple.

She milked into a wooden pail
 And sang a country ditty,
 An innocent fond lovers' tale
 That was not wise nor witty,
 Pathetically rustical,
 Too pointless for the city.

She kept in time without a beat
 As true as church-bell ringers,
 Unless she tapped time with her
 feet,
 Or squeezed it with her fingers ;
 Her clear unstudied notes were
 sweet
 As many a practised singer's.

I stood a minute out of sight,
 Stood silent for a minute,
 To eye the pail, and creamy white
 The frothing milk within it ;

To eye the comely milking maid,
 Herself so fresh and creamy.
 ' Good day to you,' at last I said ;
 She turned her head to see me :
 ' Good day,' she said with lifted
 head ;
 Her eyes looked soft and dreamy.

And all the while she milked and
 milked
 The grave cow heavy-laden.
 I've seen grand ladies plumed and
 silked,
 But not a sweeter maiden ;

But not a sweeter fresher maid
 Than this in homely cotton,
 Whose pleasant face and silky braid
 I have not yet forgotten.

Seven springs have passed since
 then, as I
 Count with a sober sorrow ;

Seven springs have come and passed
me by,
And spring sets in to-morrow.

I've half a mind to shake myself
Free just for once from London,
To set my work upon the shelf
And leave it done or undone ;

To run down by the early train,
Whirl down with shriek and
whistle,
And feel the bluff North blow again,
And mark the sprouting thistle
Set up on waste patch of the lane
Its green and tender bristle ;

And spy the scarce-blown violet
banks,
Crisp primrose leaves and others,
And watch the lambs leap at their
pranks
And butt their patient mothers.—

Alas one point in all my plan
My serious thoughts demur to :
Seven years have passed for maid
and man,
Seven years have passed for her
too ;

Perhaps my rose is overblown,
Not rosy or too rosy ;
Perhaps in farmhouse of her own
Some husband keeps her cosy,
Where I should show a face un-
known.—

Good-bye, my wayside posy.

11 July 1864.

UNDER WILLOWS

UNDER willows among the graves
One was walking, ah welladay !

Where each willow her green boughs
waves,

Come April prime, come May.
Under willows among the graves
She met her lost love, ah welladay !
Where in Autumn each wild wind
raves
And whirls sere leaves away.

He looked at her with a smile,
She looked at him with a sigh,
Both paused to look awhile :

Then he passed by,—
Passed by and whistled a tune :
She stood silent and still :
It was the sunniest day in June,
Yet one felt a chill.

Under willows among the graves
I know a certain black black pool
Scarce wrinkled when Autumn raves.

Under the turf is cool ;
Under the water it must be cold :
Winter comes cold when Summer's
past :

Though she live to be old, so old,
She shall die at last.

27 July 1864.

A SKETCH

THE blindest buzzard that I know
Does not wear wings to spread
and stir ;

Nor does my special mole wear
fur,

And grub among the roots below :
He sports a tail indeed, but then
It's to a coat : he's man with men :
His quill is cut to a pen.

In other points our friend's a mole,
A buzzard, beyond scope of speech.
He sees not what's within his
reach,

Misreads the part, ignores the whole;
 Misreads the part, so reads in vain,
 Ignores the whole though patent
 plain,—

Misreads both parts again.

My blindest buzzard that I know,
 My special mole, when will you
 see?

Oh no, you must not look at me,
 There's nothing hid for me to show.
 I might show facts as plain as day:
 But, since your eyes are blind, you'd
 say,

'Where? What?' and turn
 away.

15 August 1864.

BIRD OR BEAST?

DID any bird come flying
 After Adam and Eve,
 When the door was shut against them
 And they sat down to grieve?

I think not Eve's peacock
 Splendid to see,
 And I think not Adam's eagle;
 But a dove may be.

DID any beast come pushing
 Through the thorny hedge
 Into the thorny thistly world,
 Out from Eden's edge?

I think not a lion,
 Though his strength is such;
 But an innocent loving lamb
 May have done as much.

If the dove preached from her bough,
 And the lamb from his sod,
 The lamb and the dove
 Were preachers sent from God.

15 August 1864.

SONGS IN A CORNFIELD

A SONG in a cornfield

Where corn begins to fall,
 Where reapers are reaping,
 Reaping one, reaping all.
 Sing pretty Lettice,
 Sing Rachel, sing May;
 Only Marian 'cannot sing
 While her sweetheart's away.

Where is he gone to
 And why does he stay?
 He came across the green sea
 But for a day,
 Across the deep green sea
 To help with the hay.
 His hair was curly yellow
 And his eyes were grey,
 He laughed a merry laugh
 And said a sweet say.
 Where is he gone to
 That he comes not home?
 To-day or to-morrow
 He surely will come.
 Let him haste to joy,
 Lest he lag for sorrow,
 For one weeps to-day
 Who'll not weep to-morrow;
 To-day she must weep
 For gnawing sorrow,
 To-night she may sleep
 And not wake to-morrow.

May sang with Rachel
 In the waxing warm weather,
 Lettice sang with them,
 They sang all together:—

'Take the wheat in your arm
 Whilst day is broad above,
 Take the wheat to your bosom,
 But not a false false love.

Out in the fields
 Summer heat gloweth,
 Out in the fields
 Summer wind bloweth,
 Out in the fields
 Summer friend showeth,
 Out in the fields
 Summer wheat groweth ;
 But in the winter,
 When summer heat is dead
 And summer wind has veered
 And summer friend has fled,
 Only summer wheat remaineth,
 White cakes and bread.
 Take the wheat, clasp the wheat
 That's food for maid and dove ;
 Take the wheat to your bosom,
 But not a false false love.'

A silence of full noontide heat
 Grew on them at their toil :
 The farmer's dog woke up from sleep,
 The green snake hid her coil
 Where grass stood thickest ; bird
 and beast
 Sought shadows as they could,
 The reaping men and women paused
 And sat down where they stood ;
 They ate and drank and were re-
 freshed,
 For rest from toil is good.

While the reapers took their ease,
 Their sickles lying by,
 Rachel sang a second strain,
 And singing seemed to sigh :—

'There goes the swallow—
 Could we but follow !
 Hasty swallow, stay,
 Point us out the way ;
 Look back, swallow, turn back,
 swallow, stop, swallow.

'There went the swallow—
 Too late to follow :
 Lost our note of way,
 Lost our chance to-day ;
 Good-bye, swallow, sunny swallow,
 wise swallow.

'After the swallow
 All sweet things follow :
 All things go their way,
 Only we must stay,
 Must not follow ; good-bye, swallow,
 good swallow.'

Then listless Marian raised her head
 Among the nodding sheaves ;
 Her voice was sweeter than that
 voice ;

She sang like one who grieves :
 Her voice was sweeter than its wont
 Among the nodding sheaves ;
 All wondered while they heard her
 sing
 Like one who hopes and grieves :—

'Deeper than the hail can smite,
 Deeper than the frost can bite,
 Deep asleep through day and night,
 Our delight.

'Now thy sleep no pang can break,
 No to-morrow bid thee wake,
 Not our sobs who sit and ache
 For thy sake.

'Is it dark or light below ?
 Oh but is it cold like snow ?
 Dost thou feel the green things grow
 Fast or slow ?

'Is it warm or cold beneath,
 Oh but is it cold like death ?
 Cold like death, without a breath,
 Cold like death ?'

If he comes to-day,
 He will find her weeping ;
 If he comes to-morrow,
 He will find her sleeping ;
 If he comes the next day,
 He'll not find her at all—
 He may tear his curling hair,
 Beat his breast, and call.

26 August 1864.

IF I HAD WORDS

IF I had words, if I had words
 At least to vent my misery :—
 But muter than the speechless
 herds
 I have no voice wherewith to cry.
 I have no strength to lift my hands,
 I have no heart to lift mine eye,
 My soul is bound with brazen
 bands,
 My soul is crushed and like to
 die.
 My thoughts that wander here and
 there,
 That wander wander listlessly,
 Bring nothing back to cheer my
 care,
 Nothing that I may live thereby.
 My heart is broken in my breast,
 My breath is but a broken sigh —
 Oh if there be a land of rest
 It is far off, it is not nigh.
 If I had wings as hath a dove,
 If I had wings that I might fly,
 I yet would seek the land of love
 Where fountains run which run
 not dry :
 Though there be none that road to
 tell,
 And long that road is verily :
 Then if I lived I should do well,
 And if I died I should but die.

If I had wings as hath a dove,
 I would not sift the what and
 why,
 I would make haste to find out Love,
 If not to find at least to try.
 I would make haste to Love, my
 rest—
 To Love, my truth that doth not
 lie :
 Then if I lived it might be best,
 Or if I died I could but die.

3 September 1864.

JESSIE CAMERON

‘JESSIE, Jessie Cameron,
 Hear me but this once,’ quoth he.
 ‘Good luck go with you, neighbour’s
 son,
 But I’m no mate for you,’ quoth
 she.
 Day was verging toward the night
 There beside the moaning sea :
 Dimness overtook the light
 There where the breakers be.
 ‘O Jessie, Jessie Cameron,
 I have loved you long and
 true.’—
 ‘Good luck go with you, neighbour’s
 son,
 But I’m no mate for you.’

She was a careless fearless girl,
 And made her answer plain,
 Outspoken she to earl or churl,
 Kindhearted in the main,
 But somewhat heedless with her
 tongue
 And apt at causing pain ;
 A mirthful maiden she and young,
 Most fair for bliss or bane.

'Oh long ago I told you so,
I tell you so to-day ;
Go you your way, and let me go
Just my own free way.'

The sea swept in with moan and
foam,

Quickening the stretch of sand ;
They stood almost in sight of home ;
He strove to take her hand.

'Oh can't you take your answer
then,

And won't you understand ?
For me you're not the man of men,
I've other plans are planned.
You're good for Madge, or good for
Cis,

Or good for Kate, may be :
But what's to me the good of this
While you're not good for me ?'

They stood together on the beach,
They two alone,
And louder waxed his urgent speech,
His patience almost gone :

'Oh say but one kind word to me,
Jessie, Jessie Cameron.'—

'I'd be too proud to beg,' quoth she,
And pride was in her tone.

And pride was in her lifted head,
And in her angry eye,
And in her foot, which might have
fled

But would not fly.

Some say that he had gipsy blood,
That in his heart was guile :
Yet he had gone through fire and
flood

Only to win her smile.
Some say his grandam was a witch,
A black witch from beyond the
Nile,

Who kept an image in a niche
And talked with it the while.

And by her hut far down the lane
Some say they would not pass at
night,
Lest they should hear an unked strain
Or see an unked sight.

Alas for Jessie Cameron !—

The sea crept moaning, moaning
nigher ;

She should have hastened to be-
gone,—

The sea swept higher, breaking
by her :—

She should have hastened to her
home

While yet the west was flushed
with fire,—

But now her feet are in the foam,
The sea-foam sweeping higher.

O mother, linger at your door,
And light your lamp to make it
plain ;

But Jessie she comes home no more,
No more again.

They stood together on the strand,
They only each by each ;
Home, her home, was close at hand,
Utterly out of reach.

Her mother in the chimney nook
Heard a startled sea-gull screech,
But never turned her head to look
Towards the darkening beach :
Neighbours here and neighbours
there

Heard one scream, as if a bird
Shrilly screaming cleft the air :—
That was all they heard.

Jessie she comes home no more,
Comes home never ;
Her lover's step sounds at his door
No more for ever.

And boats may search upon the sea
And search along the river,

But none know where the bodies be ;
 Sea-winds that shiver,
 Sea-birds that breast the blast,
 Sea-waves swelling,
 Keep the secret first and last
 Of their dwelling.

Whether the tide so hemmed them
 round
 With its pitiless flow
 That when they would have gone
 they found

No way to go ;
 Whether she scorned him to the last
 With words flung to and fro,
 Or clung to him when hope was past,
 None will ever know :
 Whether he helped or hindered her,
 Threw up his life or lost it well,
 The troubled sea for all its stir
 Finds no voice to tell.

Only watchers by the dying
 Have thought they heard one pray
 Wordless, urgent ; and replying
 One seem to say him nay :
 And watchers by the dead have
 heard

A windy swell from miles away,
 With sobs and screams, but not a
 word

Distinct for them to say :
 And watchers out at sea have caught
 Glimpse of a pale gleam here or
 there,

Come and gone as quick as thought,
 Which might be hand or hair.

October 1864.

GROWN AND FLOWN

I LOVED my love from green of
 Spring
 Until sere Autumn's fall ;

But now that leaves are withering
 How should one love at all ?
 One heart's too small
 For hunger, cold, love, everything.

I loved my love on sunny days
 Until late Summer's wane ;
 But now that frost begins to glaze
 How should one love again ?
 Nay, love and pain
 Walk wide apart in diverse ways.

I loved my love—alas to see
 That this should be, alas !
 I thought that this could scarcely
 be,
 Yet has it come to pass :
 Sweet sweet love was,
 Now bitter bitter grown to me.

21 December 1864.

EVE

‘WHILE I sit at the door,
 Sick to gaze within,
 Mine eye weepeth sore
 For sorrow and sin :
 As a tree my sin stands
 To darken all lands ;
 Death is the fruit it bore.

‘How have Eden bowers grown
 Without Adam to bend them ?
 How have Eden flowers blown,
 Squandering their sweet breath,
 Without me to tend them ?
 The Tree of Life was ours,
 Tree twelvefold-fruited,
 Most lofty tree that flowers,
 Most deeply rooted :
 I chose the Tree of Death.

'Hadst thou but said me nay,
 Adam my brother,
 I might have pined away—
 I, but none other :
 God might have let thee stay
 Safe in our garden,
 By putting me away
 Beyond all pardon.

'I, Eve, sad mother
 Of all who must live,
 I, not another,
 Plucked bitterest fruit to give
 My friend, husband, lover.
 O wanton eyes, run over !
 Who but I should grieve ?
 Cain hath slain his brother :
 Of all who must die mother,
 Miserable Eve !'

Thus she sat weeping,
 Thus Eve our mother,
 Where one lay sleeping
 Slain by his brother.
 Greatest and least
 Each piteous beast
 To hear her voice
 Forgot his joys
 And set aside his feast.

The mouse paused in his walk
 And dropped his wheaten stalk ;
 Grave cattle wagged their heads
 In rumination ;
 The eagle gave a cry
 From his cloud station :
 Larks on thyme beds
 Forbore to mount or sing ;
 Bees drooped upon the wing ;
 The raven perched on high
 Forgot his ration ;
 The conies in their rock,
 A feeble nation,
 Quaked sympathetical ;

The mocking-bird left off to mock ;
 Huge camels knelt as if
 In deprecation ;
 The kind hart's tears were falling ;
 Chattered the wistful stork ;
 Dove-voices with a dying fall
 Cooed desolation,
 Answering grief by grief.

Only the serpent in the dust,
 Wriggling and crawling,
 Grinned an evil grin and thrust
 His tongue out with its fork.

30 January 1865.

SHALL I FORGET?

SHALL I forget on this side of the
 grave?

I promise nothing : you must wait
 and see,
 Patient and brave.

(O my soul, watch with him, and he
 with me.)

Shall I forget in peace of Paradise ?
 I promise nothing : follow, friend,
 and see,
 Faithful and wise.

(O my soul, lead the way he walks
 with me.)

21 February 1865.

✶ AMOR MUNDI

'OH where are you going with your
 love-locks flowing,
 On the west wind blowing along
 this valley track ?'

'The downhill path is easy, come
 with me an it please ye,
 We shall escape the uphill by
 never turning back.'

So they two went together in glowing August weather,
The honey-breathing heather lay to their left and right;
And dear she was to doat on, her swift feet seemed to float on
The air like soft twin pigeons too sportive to alight.

'Oh what is that in heaven where grey cloud-flakes are seven,
Where blackest clouds hang riven just at the rainy skirt?'

'Oh that's a meteor sent us, a message dumb, portentous,
An undeciphered solemn signal of help or hurt.'

'Oh what is that glides quickly where velvet flowers grow thickly,
Their scent comes rich and sickly?'
'A scaled and hooded worm.'

'Oh what's that in the hollow, so pale I quake to follow?'

'Oh that's a thin dead body which waits the eternal term.'

'Turn again, O my sweetest,—turn again, false and fleetest:
This beaten way thou beatest, I fear, is hell's own track.'

'Nay, too steep for hill mounting;
nay, too late for cost counting:
This downhill path is easy, but there's no turning back.'

21 February 1865.

FROM SUNSET TO RISE STAR

Go from me, summer friends, and tarry not:

I am no summer friend, but wintry cold;

A silly sheep benighted from the fold,
A sluggard with a thorn-choked garden plot.

Take counsel, sever from my lot your lot,

Dwell in your pleasant places, hoard your gold;

Lest you with me should shiver on the wold,

Athirst and hungering on a barren spot.

For I have hedged me with a thorny hedge,

I live alone, I look to die alone.

Yet sometimes when a wind sighs through the sedge

Ghosts of my buried years and friends come back,

My heart goes sighing after swallows flown

On sometime summer's unreturning track.

22 February 1865.

MAGGIE A LADY

YOU must not call me Maggie, you must not call me Dear,

For I'm Lady of the Manor now stately to see;

And if there comes a babe, as there may some happy year,

'Twill be little lord or lady at my knee.

Oh but what ails you, my sailor cousin Phil,

That you shake and turn white like a cockcrow ghost?

You're as white as I turned once down by the mill,

When one told me you and ship and crew were lost.

Philip my playfellow, when we were
boy and girl

(It was the Miller's Nancy told
it to me),

Philip with the merry life in lip and
curl,

Philip my playfellow drowned in
the sea !

I thought I should have fainted, but
I did not faint ;

I stood stunned at the moment,
scarcely sad,

Till I raised my wail of desolate
complaint

For you, my cousin, brother, all
I had.

They said I looked so pale—some
say so fair—

My lord stopped in passing to
soothe me back to life :

I know I missed a ringlet from my
hair

Next morning ; and now I am
his wife.

Look at my gown, Philip, and look
at my ring—

I'm all crimson and gold from
top to toe :

All day long I sit in the sun and
sing,

Where in the sun red roses blush
and blow.

And I'm the rose of roses, says my
lord ;

And to him I'm more than the
sun in the sky,

While I hold him fast with the
golden cord

Of a curl, with the eyelash of an
eye.

His mother said fie, and his sisters
cried shame,

His highborn ladies cried shame
from their place :

They said fie when they only heard
my name,

But fell silent when they saw my
face.

Am I so fair, Philip ? Philip, did
you think

I was so fair when we played boy
and girl

Where blue forget-me-nots bloomed
on the brink

Of our stream which the mill-
wheel sent awlirl ?

If I was fair then, sure I'm fairer
now,

Sitting where a score of servants
stand,

With a coronet on high days for my
brow

And almost a sceptre for my hand.

You're but a sailor, Philip, weather-
beaten brown,

A stranger on land and at home
on the sea,

Coasting as best you may from town
to town :

Coasting along do you often think
of me ?

I'm a great lady in a sheltered
bower,

With hands grown white through
having nought to do :

Yet sometimes I think of you hour
after hour

Till I nigh wish myself a child
with you.

23 February 1865.

DEAD HOPE

HOPE newborn one pleasant morn
Died at even :

Hope dead lives nevermore,
No not in heaven.

If his shroud were but a cloud
To weep itself away—

Or were he buried underground
To sprout some day !

But dead and gone is dead and gone,
Vainly wept upon.

Nought we place above his face
To mark the spot,
But it shows a barren place
In our lot.

Hope has birth no more on earth
Morn or even ;

Hope dead lives nevermore,
No not in heaven.

15 March 1865.

EN ROUTE

WHEREFORE art thou strange, and
not my mother ?

Thou hast stolen my heart and
broken it :

Would that I might call thy sons
' My brother,'

Call thy daughters ' Sister sweet ' :
Lying in thy lap, not in another,
Dying at thy feet.

Farewell, land of love, Italy,
Sister-land of Paradise :
With mine own feet I have trodden
thee,

Have seen with mine own eyes :
I remember, thou forgettest me,
I remember thee.

Blessed be the land that warms my
heart,

And the kindly clime that cheers,
And the cordial faces clear from art,

And the tongue sweet in mine ears:
Take my heart, its truest tenderest
part,

Dear land, take my tears.

June 1865.

ENRICA, 1865

SHE came among us from the South,
And made the North her home
awhile ;

Our dimness brightened in her
smile,
Our tongue grew sweeter in her
mouth.

We chilled beside her liberal glow,
She dwarfed us by her ampler
scale,
Her full-blown blossom made us
pale—

She Summer-like and we like snow.

We Englishwomen, trim, correct,
All minted in the selfsame mould,
Warm-hearted but of semblance
cold,

All-courteous out of self-respect.

She, woman in her natural grace,
Less trammelled she by lore of
school,

Courteous by nature not by rule,
Warm-hearted and of cordial face.

So for awhile she made her home
Among us in the rigid North,
She who from Italy came forth
And scaled the Alps and crossed the
foam.

But, if she found us like our sea,
 Of aspect colourless and chill,
 Rock-girt,—like it she found us
 still
 Deep at our deepest, strong and
 free.

1 July 1865.

HUSBAND AND WIFE

‘OH kiss me once before I go,
 To make amends for sorrow :
 Oh kiss me once before we part,
 For we mayn’t meet to-morrow.

‘And I was wrong to force your
 will,
 And wrong to mar your life :
 But kiss me once before we part
 Because you are my wife.’

She turned her head and tossed her
 head,
 And puckered up her brow :
 ‘I never kissed you yet,’ said she,
 ‘And I’ll not kiss you now.

‘Though I’m your wife by might
 and right
 And forsworn marriage vow,
 I never loved you yet,’ said she,
 ‘And I don’t love you now.’

So he went sailing on the sea,
 And she sat crossed and dumb,
 While he went sailing on the sea
 Where the storm-winds come.

He’d been away a month and day
 Counting from morn to morn :
 And many buds had turned to leaves,
 And many lambs been born ;

And many buds had turned to
 flowers

For Spring was in a glow,
 When she was laid upon her bed
 As white and cold as snow.

‘Oh let me kiss my baby once,
 Once before I die :
 And bring it sometimes to my grave
 To teach it where I lie.

‘And tell my husband, when he
 comes
 Safe back from sea,
 To love the baby that I leave
 If ever he loved me :

‘And tell him, not for might or
 right
 Or forsworn marriage vow,
 But for the helpless baby’s sake,
 I would have kissed him now.’

12 July 1865.

ITALIA, IO TI SALUTO

To come back from the sweet South,
 to the North
 Where I was born, bred, look to
 die ;
 Come back to do my day’s work in
 its day,
 Play out my play—
 Amen, amen, say I.

To see no more the country half my
 own,
 Nor hear the half familiar speech,
 Amen, I say ; I turn to that bleak
 North
 Whence I came forth—
 The South lies out of reach.

But when our swallows fly back to
the South,

To the sweet South, to the sweet
South,

The tears may come again into my
eyes

On the old wise,
And the sweet name to my mouth.

Towards July 1865.

WHAT TO DO?

O MY love and my own own deary!

What shall I do? my love is weary.

Sleep, O friend, on soft downy pillow,

Pass, O friend, as wind or as billow,

And I'll wear the willow.

No stone at his head be set,

A swelling turf be his coverlet,

Bound round with a graveyard
wattle,

Hedged round from the trampling
cattle

And the children's prattle.

I myself, instead of a stone,

Will sit by him to dwindle and
moan:

Sit and weep with a bitter weeping,

Sit and weep where my love lies
sleeping,

While my life goes creeping.

4 August 1865.

A DAUGHTER OF EVE.

A FOOL I was to sleep at noon,

And wake when night is chilly

Beneath the comfortless cold moon;

A fool to pluck my rose too soon,

A fool to snap my lily.

My garden-plot I have not kept;

Faded and all-forsaken,

I weep as I have never wept:

Oh it was summer when I slept,

It's winter now I waken.

Talk what you please of future
Spring

And sun-warmed sweet to-
morrow:—

Stripped bare of hope and every-
thing,

No more to laugh, no more to
sing,

I sit alone with sorrow.

30 September 1865.

A DIRGE

WHY were you born when the snow
was falling?

You should have come to the
cuckoo's calling,

Or when grapes are green in the
cluster,

Or at least when lithe swallows
muster

For their far off flying

From summer dying.

Why did you die when the lambs
were cropping?

You should have died at the apples'
dropping,

When the grasshopper comes to
trouble,

And the wheat-fields are sodden
stubble,

And all winds go sighing

For sweet things dying.

21 November 1865.

AN 'IMMURATA' SISTER

LIFE flows down to death; we
cannot bind

That current that it should not
flee :

Life flows down to death, as rivers
find

The inevitable sea.

Men work and think, but women
feel ;

And so (for I'm a woman, I)

And so I should be glad to die,
And cease from impotence of zeal,
And cease from hope, and cease
from dread,

And cease from yearnings with-
out gain,

And cease from all this world of
pain,
And be at peace among the dead.

Hearts that die, by death renew
their youth,

Lightened of this life that doubts
and dies ;

Silent and contented, while the
Truth

Unveiled makes them wise.

Why should I seek and never find

That something which I have
not had ?

Fair and unutterably sad

The world hath sought time out of
mind ;

The world hath sought and I have
sought,—

Ah empty world and empty I !

For we have spent our strength for
nought,

And soon it will be time to die.

Sparks fly upward toward their
fount of fire,

Kindling, flashing, hovering :—
Kindle, flash, my soul ; mount
higher and higher,
Thou whole burnt-offering !

Circa 1865.

ONCE FOR ALL

(MARGARET)

I SAID : This is a beautiful fresh rose.

I said : I will delight me with
its scent,

Will watch its lovely curve of
languishment,

Will watch its leaves uncloset, its
heart uncloset.

I said : Old earth has put away her
snows,

All living things make merry to
their bent,

A flower is come for every flower
that went

In autumn, the sun glows, the south
wind blows.

So walking in a garden of delight

I came upon one sheltered
shadowed nook

Where broad leaf shadows veiled
the day with night,

And there lay snow unmelted by
the sun :—

I answered : Take who will the
path I took,

Winter nips once for all ; love is
but one.

8 January 1866.

A SMILE AND A SIGH

A SMILE because the nights are short !
And every morning brings such
pleasure

Of sweet love-making, harmless
sport :
Love that makes and finds its
treasure ;
Love, treasure without measure.

A sigh because the days are long !
Long long these days that pass
in sighing,
A burden saddens every song.
While time lags which should be
flying,
We live who would be dying.
February 1866.

IN A CERTAIN PLACE

I FOUND Love in a certain place
Asleep and cold — or cold and
dead ?—
All ivory-white upon his bed,
All ivory-white his face.
His hands were folded
On his quiet breast,
To his figure laid at rest
Chilly bed was moulded.

His hair hung lax about his brow,
I had not seen his face before :
Or, if I saw it once, it wore
Another aspect now.
No trace of last night's sorrow,
No shadow of to-morrow :
All at peace (thus all sorrows cease),
All at peace.

I wondered : Were his eyes
Soft or falcon-clear ?
I wondered : As he lies
Does he feel me near ?
In silence my heart spoke
And wondered : If he woke
And found me sitting nigh him

And felt me sitting by him,
If life flushed to his cheek,
He living man with men,
Then if I heard him speak
Oh should I know him then ?

6 March 1866.

CANNOT SWEETEN

'If that's water you wash your
hands in,
Why is it black as ink is black ?'
'Because my hands are foul with my
folly :
Oh the lost time that comes not
back !'

'If that's water you bathe your feet
in,
Why is it red as wine is red ?'
'Because my feet sought blood in
their goings,
Red, red is the track they tread.'

'Slew you mother or slew you father
That your foulness passeth not
by ?'
'Not father, and oh not mother :
I slew my love with an evil eye.'

'Slew you sister or slew you brother
That in peace you have not a
part ?'
'Not brother and oh not sister :
I slew my love with a hardened
heart.

'He loved me because he loved me,
Not for grace or beauty I had :
He loved me because he loved me :
For his loving me I was glad.

'Yet I loved him not for his loving,
While I played with his love and
truth,
Not loving him for his loving,
Wasting his joy, wasting his
youth.

'I ate his life as a banquet,
I drank his life as new wine,
I fattened upon his leanness,
Mine to flourish and his to pine.

'So his life fled as running water,
So it perished as water spilt :
If black my hands and my feet as
scarlet,
Blacker, redder my heart of guilt.

'Cold as a stone, as hard, as heavy :
All my sighs ease it no whit,
All my tears make it no cleaner,
Dropping, dropping, dropping
on it.'

8 March 1866.

OF MY LIFE

I WEARY of my life
Through the long sultry day,
While happy creatures play
Their harmless lives away :—
What is my life ?

I weary of my life
Through the slow tedious night,
While, earth and heaven's delight,
The moon walks forth in white :—
What is my life ?

If I might, I would die :
My soul should flee away
To day that is not day
Where sweet souls sing and say—
If I might die !

If I might, I would die :
My body out of sight,
All night that is not night
My soul should walk in white—
If I might die !

15 May 1866.

SONG

OH what comes over the sea,
Shoals and quicksands past ;
And what comes home to me,
Sailing slow, sailing fast ?

A wind comes over the sea
With a moan in its blast ;
But nothing comes home to me,
Sailing slow, sailing fast.

Let me be, let me be,
For my lot is cast :
Land or sea all's one to me,
And sail it slow or fast.

11 June 1866.

FROM METASTASIO

FIRST, last, and dearest,
My love, mine own,
Thee best beloved,
Thee love alone,
Once and for ever
So love I thee.

First as a suppliant
Love makes his moan,
Then as a monarch
Sets up his throne :
Once and for ever—
So love I thee.

Circa 1868.

AUTUMN VIOLETS

KEEP love for youth, and violets for
the spring :

Or if these bloom when worn-out
autumn grieves

Let them lie hid in double shade
of leaves,

Their own, and others' dropped
down withering ;

For violets suit when home birds
build and sing,

Not when the outbound bird a
passage cleaves ;

Not with dry stubble of mown
harvest sheaves,

But when the green world buds to
blossoming.

Keep violets for the spring, and love
for youth,

Love that should dwell with
beauty, mirth, and hope :

Or if a later sadder love be
born,

Let this not look for grace beyond
its scope,

But give itself, nor plead for answer-
ing truth—

A grateful Ruth tho' gleaning
scanty corn.

Before 1869.

THEY DESIRE A BETTER
COUNTRY

I

I WOULD not if I could undo my
past,

Tho' for its sake my future is a
blank ;

My past for which I have myself
to thank,

For all its faults and follies first and
last.

I would not cast anew the lot once
cast,

Or launch a second ship for one
that sank,

Or drug with sweets the bitterness
I drank,

Or break by feasting my perpetual
fast.

I would not if I could : for much
more dear

Is one remembrance than a hun-
dred joys,

More than a thousand hopes
in jubilee ;

Dearer the music of one tearful
voice

That unforgotten calls and calls
to me,

'Follow me here, rise up, and follow
here.'

II

What seekest thou, far in the un-
known land ?

In hope I follow joy gone on
before ;

In hope and fear persistent more
and more,

As the dry desert lengthens out its
sand.

Whilst day and night I carry in my
hand

The golden key to ope the golden
door

Of golden home ; yet mine eye
weepeth sore,

For long the journey is that makes
no stand.

And who is this that veiled doth
walk with thee ?

Lo this is Love that walketh at
my right ;

One exile holds us both, and
 we are bound
 To selfsame home-joys in the land
 of light.
 Weeping thou walkest with him ;
 weepeth he ?—
 Some sobbing weep, some weep
 and make no sound.

III

A dimness of a glory glimmers here
 Thro' veils and distance from the
 space remote ;
 A faintest far vibration of a note
 Reaches to us and seems to bring
 us near ;
 Causing our face to glow with braver
 cheer,
 Making the serried mist to stand
 afloat,
 Subduing languor with an anti-
 dote,
 And strengthening love almost to
 cast out fear :
 Till for one moment golden city walls
 Rise looming on us, golden walls
 of home,
 Light of our eyes until the darkness
 falls ;
 Then thro' the outer darkness
 burdensome
 I hear again the tender voice that
 calls,
 ' Follow me hither, follow, rise,
 and come.'

Before 1870.

BY WAY OF REMEMBRANCE

REMEMBER, if I claim too much of
 you,
 I claim it of my brother and my
 friend :

Have patience with me till the
 hidden end—
 Bitter or sweet, in mercy shut from
 view.
 Pay me my due ; though I to pay
 your due
 Am all too poor, and past what
 will can mend :
 Thus of your bounty you must
 give and lend,
 Still unrepaid by aught I look to
 do.
 Still unrepaid by aught of mine on
 earth :
 But overpaid, please God, when
 recompense
 Beyond the mystic Jordan and new
 birth
 Is dealt to virtue as to innocence ;
 When Angels singing praises in
 their mirth
 Have borne you in their arms
 and fetched you hence.

Will you be there ? my yearning
 heart has cried.
 Ah me, my love, my love, shall I
 be there,
 To sit down in your glory and to
 share
 Your gladness, glowing as a virgin
 bride ?
 Or will another, dearer, fairer-eyed,
 Sit nigher to you in your jubilee,
 And mindful one of other will you
 be
 Borne higher and higher on joy's
 ebbless tide ?
 Yea, if I love I will not grudge you
 this :
 I too shall float upon that heavenly
 sea
 And sing my joyful praises with-
 out ache ;

Your overflow of joy shall gladden
me,
My whole heart shall sing
praises for your sake,
And find its own fulfilment in your
bliss.

In Resurrection is it awfuller
That rising of the All or of the
Each—

Of all kins of all nations of all
speech,

Or one by one of *him* and *him* and
her?

When dust reanimate begins to stir,
Here, there, beyond, beyond,
reach beyond reach;

While every wave disgorges on
its beach,

Alive or dead-in-life, some seafarer.

In Resurrection, on the day of days,
That day of mourning throughout
all the earth,

In Resurrection may we meet
again:

No more with stricken hearts
to part in twain;

As once in sorrow one, now one
in mirth,

One in our resurrection-songs of
praise.

I love you and you know it—this at
least,

This comfort is mine own in all
my pain:

You know it, and can never doubt
again,

And love's mere self is a continual
feast:

Not oath of mine nor blessing-word
of priest

Could make my love more certain
or more plain.

R

Life as a rolling moon doth wax
and wane—

O weary moon, still rounding, still
decreased!

Life wanes: and when Love folds
his wings above

Tired joy, and less we feel his
conscious pulse,

Let us go fall asleep, dear
Friend, in peace;—

A little while, and age and
sorrow cease;

A little while, and love reborn
annuls

Loss and decay and death—and all
is love.

Towards October 1870.

AN ECHO FROM WILLOW- WOOD

O ye, all ye that walk in willow-wood.
D. G. ROSSETTI.

Two gazed into a pool, he gazed
and she,

Not hand in hand, yet heart in
heart, I think,

Pale and reluctant on the water's
brink,

As on the brink of parting which
must be.

Each eyed the other's aspect, she
and he,

Each felt one hungering heart
leap up and sink,

Each tasted bitterness which both
must drink,

There on the brink of life's dividing
sea.

Lilies upon the surface, deep below
Two wistful faces craving each
for each,

2 C

Resolute and reluctant without
speech :—

A sudden ripple made the faces flow,
One moment joined, to vanish out
of reach :

So those hearts joined, and ah
were parted so.

Circa 1870.

THE GERMAN-FRENCH CAMPAIGN

1870-1871

These two pieces, written during the
suspense of a great nation's agony, aim at
expressing human sympathy, not political
bias.

I

THY BROTHER'S BLOOD CRIETH

ALL her corn-fields rippled in the
sunshine,

All her lovely vines, sweets-laden,
bowed ;

Yet some weeks to harvest and to
vintage :

When, as one man's hand, a cloud
Rose and spread, and, blackening,
burst asunder

In rain and fire and thunder.

Is there nought to reap in the day
of harvest ?

Hath the vine in her day no fruit
to yield ?

Yea, men tread the press, but not
for sweetness,

And they reap a red crop from
the field.

Build barns, ye reapers, garner all
aright,

Though your souls be called
to-night.

A cry of tears goes up from blackened
homesteads,

A cry of blood goes up from reek-
ing earth :

Tears and blood have a cry that
pierces Heaven

Through all its Hallelujah swells
of mirth ;

God hears their cry, and though He
tarry, yet

He doth not forget.

Mournful Mother, prone in dust and
weeping,

Who shall comfort thee for those
who are not ?

As thou didst, men do to thee ; and
heap the measure

And heat the furnace sevenfold
hot :

As thou once, now these to thee—
who pitieth thee

From sea to sea ?

O thou King, terrible in strength,
and building

Thy strong future on thy past !

Though he drink the last, the King
of Sheshach,

Yet he shall drink at the last.

Art thou greater than great Babylon,
Which lies overthrown ?

Take heed, ye unwise among the
people ;

O ye fools, when will ye under-
stand ?—

He that planted the ear shall He
not hear,

Nor He smite who formed the
hand ?

'Vengeance is Mine, is Mine,' thus
saith the Lord :

O Man, put up thy sword.

2

'TO-DAY FOR ME'

SHE sitteth still who used to
dance,
She weepeth sore and more and
more :—
Let us sit with thee weeping sore,
O fair France.

She trembleth as the days advance
Who used to be so light of heart :—
We in thy trembling bear a part,
Sister France.

Her eyes shine tearful as they
glance :
'Who shall give back my slaughtered
sons ?
'Bind up,' she saith, 'my wounded
ones.'—
Alas, France !

She struggles in a deathly trance,
As in a dream her pulses stir,
She hears the nations calling her,
'France, France, France !'

Thou people of the lifted lance,
Forbear her tears, forbear her
blood ;
Roll back, roll back, thy whelming
flood,
Back from France.

Eye not her loveliness askance,
Forge not for her a galling chain :
Leave her at peace to bloom again,
Vine-clad France.

A time there is for change and
chance,
A time for passing of the cup :

And One abides can yet bind up
Broken France.

A time there is for change and
chance :
Who next shall drink the trembling
cup,
Wring out its dregs and suck them
up
After France ?
Towards January 1871.

VENUS'S LOOKING-GLASS.

I MARKED where lovely Venus and
her court
With song and dance and merry
laugh went by ;
Weightless, their wingless feet
seemed made to fly,
Bound from the ground, and in mid
air to sport.
Left far behind I heard the dolphins
snort,
Tracking their goddess with a
wistful eye,
Around whose head white doves
rose, wheeling high
Or low, and cooed after their tender
sort.
All this I saw in Spring. Through
summer heat
I saw the lovely Queen of Love
no more.
But when flushed Autumn
through the woodlands went
I spied sweet Venus walk amid the
wheat :
Whom seeing, every harvester
gave o'er
His toil, and laught and hoped
and was content.

October 1872.

LOVE LIES BLEEDING

LOVE, that is dead and buried,
 yesterday
 Out of his grave rose up before
 my face ;
 No recognition in his look, no
 trace
 Of memory in his eyes dust-dimmed
 and grey ;
 While I, remembering, found no
 word to say,
 But felt my quickened heart leap
 in its place ;
 Caught afterglow thrown back
 from long-set days,
 Caught echoes of all music past away.
 Was this indeed to meet?—I mind
 me yet
 In youth we met when hope and
 love were quick,
 We parted with hope dead but
 love alive :
 I mind me how we parted then
 heart-sick,
 Remembering, loving, hopeless,
 weak to strive :—
 Was this to meet? Not so, we have
 not met.

Circa 1872.

DAYS OF VANITY

A DREAM that waketh,
 Bubble that breaketh,
 Song whose burden sightheth,
 A passing breath,
 Smoke that vanisheth,—
 Such is life that dieth.

A flower that fadeth,
 Fruit the tree sheddeth,

Trackless bird that flieth,
 Summer time brief,—
 Falling of the leaf,—
 Such is life that dieth.

A scent exhaling,
 Snow waters failing,
 Morning dew that drieth,
 A windy blast,
 Lengthening shadows cast,
 Such is life that dieth.

A scanty measure,
 Rust-eaten treasure,
 Spending that nought buyeth,
 Moth on the wing,
 Toil unprofiting,—
 Such is life that dieth.

Morrow by morrow
 Sorrow breeds sorrow,
 For this my song sightheth ;
 From day to night
 We lapse out of sight.—
 Such is life that dieth.

Before 1873.

A BIRD SONG

It's a year almost that I have not
 seen her :
 Oh last summer green things were
 greener,
 Brambles fewer, the blue sky bluer !

It's surely summer, for there's a
 swallow :
 Come one swallow, his mate will
 follow,
 The bird-race quicken, and wheel
 and thicken.

Oh happy swallow whose mate will
follow
O'er height, o'er hollow! I'd be a
swallow,
To build this weather one nest
together.

Before 1873.

COR MIO

STILL sometimes in my secret heart
of hearts

I say 'Cor mio' when I remember
you,

And thus I yield us both one
tender due,

Welding one whole of two divided
parts.

Ah Friend, too wise or unwise for
such arts,

Ah noble Friend, silent and strong
and true,

Would you have given me roses
for the rue

For which I bartered roses in love's
marts?

So late in autumn one forgets the
spring,

Forgets the summer with its
opulence,

The callow birds that long have
found a wing,

The swallows that more lately got
them hence :

Will anything like spring, will any-
thing

Like summer, rouse one day the
slumbering sense?

Circa 1875.

MEETING

I SAID good-bye in hope ;
But, now we meet again,

I have no hope at all
Of anything but pain,—
Our parting and our meeting
Alike in vain.

Hope on through all your life

Until the end, dear friend :

Live through your noble life

Where joy and promise blend—

I too will live my life

Until the end.

Long may your vine entwine,
Long may your fig-tree spread,
Their paradise of shade
Above your cherished head :
My shelter was a gourd,
And it is dead.

Yet, when out of a grave
We are gathered home at last,
Then may we own life spilt
No good worth holding fast :—
Death had its bitterness,
But it is past.

Circa 1875.

A GREEN CORNFIELD

'And singing still dost soar and soaring
ever singest.'

THE earth was green, the sky was
blue :

I saw and heard one sunny morn
A skylark hang between the two,
A singing speck above the corn ;

A stage below, in gay accord,
White butterflies danced on the
wing,
And still the singing skylark soared,
And silent sank and soared to
sing.

The cornfield stretched a tender
green
To right and left beside my walks;
I knew he had a nest unseen
Somewhere among the million
stalks.

And as I paused to hear his song
While swift the sunny moments
slid,
Perhaps his mate sat listening long,
And listened longer than I did.
Before 1876.

A BRIDE SONG

THROUGH the vales to my love!
To the happy small nest of home
Green from basement to roof;
Where the honey-bees come
To the window-sill flowers,
And dive from above,
Safe from the spider that weaves
Her warp and her woof
In some outermost leaves.

Through the vales to my love!
In sweet April hours
All rainbows and showers,
While dove answers dove,—
In beautiful May,
When the orchards are tender
And frothing with flowers,—
In opulent June
When the wheat stands up slender
By sweet-smelling hay,
And half the sun's splendour
Descends to the moon.

Through the vales to my love!
Where the turf is so soft to the feet
And the thyme makes it sweet,
And the stately foxglove
Hangs silent its exquisite bells;

And where water wells
The greenness grows greener,
And bulrushes stand
Round a lily to screen her.

Nevertheless, if this land,
Like a garden to smell and to sight,
Were turned to a desert of sand;
Stripped bare of delight,
All its best gone to worst,
For my feet no repose,
No water to comfort my thirst,
And heaven like a furnace above,—
The desert would be
As gushing of waters to me,
The wilderness be as a rose,
If it led me to thee,
O my love.

Before 1876.

CONFLUENTS

As rivers seek the sea,
Much more deep than they,
So my soul seeks thee
Far away;
As running rivers moan
On their course alone,
So I moan
Left alone.

As the delicate rose
To the sun's sweet strength
Doth herself unclothe,
Breadth and length;
So spreads my heart to thee
Unveiled utterly,
I to thee
Utterly.

As morning dew exhales
Sunwards pure and free

So my spirit fails
 After thee.
 As dew leaves not a trace
 On the green earth's face ;
 I, no trace
 On thy face.

Its goal the river knows,
 Dewdrops find a way,
 Sunlight cheers the rose
 In her day :
 Shall I, lone sorrow past,
 Find thee at the last ?
 Sorrow past,
 Thee at last ?

Before 1876.

BIRD RAPTURES

THE sunrise wakes the lark to sing,
 The moonrise wakes the nightin-
 gale.
 Come darkness, moonrise, every-
 thing
 That is so silent, sweet, and pale,
 Come, so ye wake the nightingale.

Make haste to mount, thou wistful
 moon,
 Make haste to wake the nightin-
 gale :
 Let silence set the world in tune
 To hearken to that wordless tale
 Which warbles from the nightin-
 gale.

O herald skylark, stay thy flight
 One moment, for a nightingale
 Floods us with sorrow and delight.
 To-morrow thou shalt hoist the
 sail ;
 Leave us to-night the nightingale.

Before 1876.

VALENTINES TO MY MOTHER

1876

FAIRER than younger beauties, more
 beloved

Than many a wife,
 By stress of Time's vicissitudes un-
 moved

From settled calm of life ;

Endearing rectitude to those who
 watch

The verdict of your face,
 Raising and making gracious those
 who catch

A semblance of your grace :

With kindly lips of welcome, and
 with pleased

Propitious eyes benign,
 Accept a kiss of homage from your
 least

Last Valentine.

1877

OWN Mother dear,
 We all rejoicing here
 Wait for each other,
 Daughter for Mother,
 Sister for Brother,
 Till each dear face appear
 Transfigured by Love's flame
 Yet still the same,—
 The same yet new,—
 My face to you,
 Your face to me,
 Made lovelier by Love's flame
 But still the same ;
 Most dear to see
 In halo of Love's flame,
 Because the same.

C. G. for M. F. R.

1878

BLESSED Dear and Heart's Delight,
 Companion, Friend, and Mother
 mine,
 Round whom my fears and love
 entwine,—
 With whom I hope to stand
 and sing
 Where angels form the outer
 ring
 Round singing Saints who, clad in
 white,
 Know no more of day or night
 Or death or any changeful thing,
 Or anything that is not love,
 Human love and Love Divine,—
 Bid me to that tryst above,
 Bless your Valentine.

1879

MOTHER mine,
 Whom every year
 Doth endear,—
 Before sweet Spring
 (That sweetest thing
 Brimfull of bliss)
 Sets all the throng
 Of birds a-wooing,
 Billing and cooing,—
 Your Valentine
 Sings you a song,
 Gives you a kiss.

1880

MORE shower than shine
 Brings sweet St. Valentine;
 Warm shine, warm shower,
 Bring up sweet flower on flower.
 Through shower and shine
 Loves you your Valentine,
 Through shine, through shower,
 Through summer's flush, through
 autumn's fading hour.

1881

Too cold almost for hope of Spring
 Or firstfruits from the realm of
 flowers,
 Your dauntless Valentine, I bring
 One sprig of love, and sing
 'Love has no Winter hours.'

If even in this world love is love
 (This wintry world which felt the
 Fall),
 What must it be in heaven above
 Where love to great and small
 Is all in all?

1882

My blessed Mother dozing in her
 chair
 On Christmas Day seemed an
 embodied Love,
 A comfortable Love with soft brown
 hair
 Softened and silvered to a tint
 of dove;
 A better sort of Venus with an
 air
 Angelical from thoughts that dwell
 above;
 A wiser Pallas in whose body fair
 Enshrined a blessed soul looks
 out thereof.
 Winter brought holly then; now
 Spring has brought
 Paler and frailer snowdrops
 shivering;
 And I have brought a simple humble
 thought—
 I her devoted duteous Valentine—
 A lifelong thought which thrills
 this song I sing,
 A lifelong love to this dear Saint of
 mine.

1883

A WORLD of change and loss, a
 world of death,
 Of heart and eyes that fail, of
 labouring breath,
 Of pains to bear and painful deeds
 to do :—
 Nevertheless a world of life to come
 And love ; where you're at home,
 while in our home
 Your Valentine rejoices, having you.

1884

ANOTHER year of joy and grief,
 Another year of hope and fear :
 O Mother, is life long or brief ?
 We hasten while we linger here.
 But, since we linger, love me still
 And bless me still, O Mother mine,
 While hand in hand we scale life's
 hill,
 You guide, and I your Valentine.

1885

ALL the Robin Redbreasts
 Have lived the winter through,
 Jenny Wrens have pecked their fill
 And found a work to do ;
 Families of Sparrows
 Have weathered wind and
 storm
 With Rabbit on the stony hill
 And Hare upon her form.
 You and I, my Mother,
 Have lived the winter through,
 And still we play our daily parts
 And still find work to do :
 And still the cornfields flourish,
 The olive and the vine,
 And still you reign my Queen of
 Hearts
 And I'm your Valentine.

1886

WINTER'S latest snowflake is the
 snowdrop flower,
 Yellow crocus kindles the first
 flame of the Spring,
 At that time appointed, at that day
 and hour,
 When life reawakens and hope
 in everything.
 Such a tender snowflake in the
 wintry weather,
 Such a feeble flamelet for chilled
 St. Valentine,—
 But blest be any weather which
 finds us still together,
 My pleasure and my treasure, O
 blessed Mother mine.

MIRRORS OF LIFE AND DEATH

THE mystery of Life, the mystery
 Of Death, I see
 Darkly as in a glass ;
 Their shadows pass,
 And talk with me.

As the flush of a Morning Sky,
 As a Morning Sky colourless—
 Each yields its measure of light
 To a wet world or a dry ;
 Each fares through day to night
 With equal pace,
 And then each one
 Is done.

As the Sun with glory and grace
 In his face,
 Benignantly hot,
 Graciously radiant and keen,
 Ready to rise and to run,—
 Not without spot,
 Not even the Sun.

As the Moon
On the wax, on the wane,
With night for her noon ;
Vanishing soon,
To appear again.

As Roses that droop
Half warm, half chill, in the languid
May,
And breathe out a scent
Sweet and faint ;
Till the wind gives one swoop
To scatter their beauty away.

As Lilies a multitude,
One dipping, one rising, one sinking,
On rippling waters, clear blue
And pure for their drinking ;
One new dead, and one opened anew,
And all good.

As a cankered pale Flower,
With death for a dower,
Each hour of its life half dead ;
With death for a crown
Weighing down
Its head.

As an Eagle, half strength and half
grace,
Most potent to face
Unwinking the splendour of light ;
Harrying the East and the West,
Soaring aloft from our sight ;
Yet one day or one night dropped
to rest
On the low common earth
Of his birth.

As a Dove,
Not alone,
In a world of her own
Full of fluttering soft noises
And tender sweet voices
Of love.

As a Mouse
Keeping house
In the fork of a tree,
With nuts in a crevice,
And an acorn or two ;
What cares he
For blossoming boughs,
Or the song-singing beves
Of birds in their glee,
Scarlet, or golden, or blue ?

As a Mole grubbing underground ;
When it comes to the light
It grubs its way back again,
Feeling no bias of fur
To hamper it in its stir,
Scant of pleasure and pain,
Sinking itself out of sight
Without sound.

As Waters that drop and drop,
Weariness without end,
That drop and never stop,
Wear that nothing can mend,
Till one day they drop—
Stop—
And there's an end,
And matters mend.

As Trees, beneath whose skin
We mark not the sap begin
To swell and rise,
Till the whole bursts out in green :
We mark the falling leaves
When the wide world grieves
And sighs.

As a Forest on fire,
Where maddened creatures desire
Wet mud or wings
Beyond all those things
Which could assuage desire
On this side the flaming fire.

As Wind with a sob and sigh
To which there comes no reply

But a rustle and shiver
From rushes of the river ;
As Wind with a desolate moan,
Moaning on alone.

As a Desert all sand,
Blank, neither water nor land
For solace or dwelling or culture,
Where the storms and the wild
creatures howl ;
Given over to lion and vulture,
To ostrich and jackal and owl :
Yet somewhere an oasis lies ;
There waters arise
To nourish one seedling of balm
Perhaps, or one palm.

As the Sea,
Murmuring, shifting, swaying ;
One time sunnily playing,
One time wrecking and slaying ;
In whichever mood it be,
Worst or best,
Never at rest.

As still Waters and deep,
As shallow Waters that brawl,
As rapid Waters that leap
To their fall.

As Music, as Colour, as Shape,
Keys of rapture and pain
Turning in vain
In a lock which turns not again,
While breaths and moments escape.

As Spring, all bloom and desire ;
As Summer, all gift and fire ;
As Autumn, a dying glow ;
As Winter, with nought to show :

Winter which lays its dead all out
of sight,
All clothed in white,
All waiting for the long-awaited light.

Before 1878.

AN OCTOBER GARDEN

In my Autumn garden I was fain
To mourn among my scattered
roses ;
Alas for that last rosebud which
uncloses
To Autumn's languid sun and rain
When all the world is on the wane !
Which has not felt the sweet
constraint of June,
Nor heard the nightingale in tune.

Broad-faced asters by my garden
walk,
You are but coarse compared with
roses :
More choice, more dear that rose-
bud which uncloses,
Faint-scented, pinched, upon its stalk,
That least and last which cold winds
balk ;
A rose it is though least and last
of all,
A rose to me though at the fall.

Before 1878.

FREAKS OF FASHION

SUCH a hubbub in the nests,
Such a bustle and squeak !
Nestlings, guiltless of a feather,
Learning just to speak,
Ask—' And how about the fashions ?'
From a cavernous beak.

Perched on bushes, perched on
hedges,
Perched on firm hahas,
Perched on anything that holds them,
Gay papas and grave mammas
Teach the knowledge-thirsty nest-
lings :
Hear the gay papas.

Robin says : 'A scarlet waistcoat
Will be all the wear,
Snug, and also cheerful-looking
For the frostiest air,
Comfortable for the chest too
When one comes to plume and
pair.'

'Neat grey hoods will be in vogue,'
Quoth a Jackdaw : 'glossy grey,
Setting close, yet setting easy,
Nothing fly-away ;
Suited to our misty mornings,
À la négligée.'

Flushing salmon, flushing sulphur,
Haughty Cockatoos
Answer—'Hoods may do for morn-
ings,
But for evenings choose
High head-dresses, curved like
crescents
Such as well-bred persons use.'

'Top-knots, yes ; yet more essential
Still, a train or tail,'
Screamed the Peacock : 'gemmed
and lustrous,
Not too stiff, and not too frail ;
Those are best which rearrange as
Fans, and spread or trail.'

Spoke the Swan, entrenched behind
An inimitable neck :
'After all, there's nothing sweeter
For the lawn or lake
Than simple white, if fine and flaky
And absolutely free from speck.'

'Yellow,' hinted a Canary,
'Warmer, not less *distingué.*'
'Peach colour,' put in a Lory,
'Cannot look *outré.*'
'All the colours are in fashion,
And are right,' the Parrots say.

'Very well. *But do contrast
Tints harmonious,'
Piped a Blackbird, justly proud
Of bill aurigerous ;
'Half the world may learn a lesson
As to that from us.'

Then a Stork took up the word :
'Aim at height and *chic* :
Not high heels, they're common ;
somehow,
Stilted legs, not thick,
Nor yet thin :' he just glanced
downward
And snapped-to his beak.

Here a rustling and a whirring,
As of fans outspread,
Hinted that mammas felt anxious
Lest the next thing said
Might prove less than quite judicious,
Or even underbred.

So a mother Auk resumed
The broken thread of speech :
'Let colours sort themselves, my
dears,
Yellow, or red, or peach ;
The main points, as it seems to me,
We mothers have to teach,

'Are form and texture, elegance,
An air reserved, sublime ;
The mode of wearing what we wear
With due regard to month and
clime.

But now, let's all compose ourselves,
It's almost breakfast-time.'

A hubbub, a squeak, a bustle !
Who cares to chatter or sing
With delightful breakfast coming ?
Yet they whisper under the wing :
'So we may wear whatever we like,
Anything, everything !'

Circa 1878.

YET A LITTLE WHILE

I DREAMED and did not seek : to-day
I seek

Who can no longer dream ;

But now am all behindhand, waxen
weak,

And dazed amid so many things
that gleam

Yet are not what they seem.

I dreamed and did not work : to-day

I work,

Kept wide awake by care

And loss, and perils dimly guessed
to lurk ;

I work and reap not, while my
life goes bare

And void in wintry air.

I hope indeed ; but hope itself is fear

Viewed on the sunny side ;

I hope, and disregard the world
that's here,

The prizes drawn, the sweet things
that betide ;

I hope, and I abide.

Before 1879.

PARTED

HAD Fortune parted us,

Fortune is blind ;

Had Anger parted us,

Anger unkind—

But since God parts us

Let us part humbly,

Bearing our burden

Bravely and dumbly.

And since there is but one

Heaven, not another,

Let us not close that door

Against each other.

God's Love is higher than mine,

Christ's tenfold proved,

Yet even I would die

For thee, Beloved.

Circa 1880.

TO-DAY'S BURDEN

'ARISE, depart, for this is not your
rest.'—

Oh burden of all burdens, still to
arise

And still depart nor rest in any
wise !

Rolling, still rolling thus from East
to West,

Earth journeys on her immemorial
quest,

Whom a moon chases in no
different guise.

Thus stars pursue their courses,
and thus flies

The sun, and thus all creatures
manifest

Unrest the common heritage, the ban
Flung broadcast to all humankind,
on all

Who live—for, living, all are
bound to die.

That which is old, we know that it
is man.

These have no rest who sit and
dream and sigh,

Nor have those rest who wrestle
and who fall.

Circa 1881.

THE KEY-NOTE

WHERE are the songs I used to
know,

Where are the notes I used to
sing ?

I have forgotten everything
 I used to know so long ago ;
 Summer has followed after Spring ;
 Now Autumn is so shrunk and sere
 I scarcely think a sadder thing
 Can be the Winter of my year.

Yet Robin sings through Winter's
 rest,

When bushes put their berries on ;
 While they their ruddy jewels don,
 He sings out of a ruddy breast ;
 The hips and haws and ruddy breast
 Make one spot warm where snow-
 flakes lie ;

They break and cheer the unlovely
 rest

Of Winter's pause—and why not
 I?

Before 1882.

HE AND SHE

‘SHOULD one of us remember,
 And one of us forget,
 I wish I knew what each will do,
 But who can tell as yet?’

‘Should one of us remember,
 And one of us forget,
 I promise you what I will do—
 And I'm content to wait for you,
 And not be sure as yet.’

Before 1882.

‘LUSCIOUS AND SORROW- FUL’

BEAUTIFUL, tender, wasting away
 for sorrow ;

Thus to-day ; and how shall it be
 with thee to-morrow ?

Beautiful, tender—what else ?

A hope tells.

Beautiful, tender, keeping the jubilee
 In the land of home together, past
 death and sea ;

No more change or death, no
 more

Salt sea-shore.

Before 1882.

DE PROFUNDIS

OH why is heaven built so far,

Oh why is earth set so remote ?

I cannot reach the nearest star
 That hangs afloat.

I would not care to reach the moon,

One round monotonous of change ;

Yet even she repeats her tune
 Beyond my range.

I never watch the scattered fire

Of stars, or sun's far-trailing train,

But all my heart is one desire,
 And all in vain :

For I am bound with fleshly bands,

Joy, beauty, lie beyond my scope ;

I strain my heart, I stretch my hands,
 And catch at hope.

Before 1882.

TEMPUS FUGIT

LOVELY Spring,
 A brief sweet thing,
 Is swift on the wing ;

Gracious Summer,
 A slow sweet comer,
 Hastens past ;

Autumn while sweet

Is all incomplete

With a moaning blast.

Nothing can last,

Can be cleaved unto,
 Can be dwelt upon.
 It is hurried through,
 It is come and gone,
 Undone it cannot be done ;
 It is ever to do,
 Ever old, ever new,
 Ever waxing old
 And lapsing to Winter cold.

Before 1882.

GOLDEN GLORIES

THE buttercup is like a golden cup,
 The marigold is like a golden frill,
 The daisy with a golden eye looks
 up,
 And golden spreads the flag beside
 the rill,
 And gay and golden nods the
 daffodil ;
 The gorse common swells a golden
 sea,
 The cowslip hangs a head of
 golden tips,
 And golden drips the honey which
 the bee
 Sucks from sweet hearts of flowers
 and stores and sips.

Before 1882.

JOHNNY

FOUNDED ON AN ANECDOTE OF
 THE FIRST FRENCH REVOLUTION

JOHNNY had a golden head
 Like a golden mop in blow,
 Right and left his curls would spread
 In a glory and a glow,
 And they framed his honest face
 Like stray sunbeams out of place.

Long and thick, they half could hide
 How threadbare his patched jacket
 hung ;
 They used to be his Mother's pride ;
 She praised them with a tender
 tongue,
 And stroked them with a loving
 finger
 That smoothed and stroked and
 loved to linger.

On a doorstep Johnny sat,
 Up and down the street looked he ;
 Johnny did not own a hat,
 Hot or cold tho' days might be ;
 Johnny did not own a boot
 To cover up his muddy foot.

Johnny's face was pale and thin,
 Pale with hunger and with crying ;
 For his Mother lay within,
 Talked and tossed and seemed a-
 dying,
 While Johnny racked his brains to
 think
 How to get her help and drink,

Get her physic, get her tea,
 Get her bread and something
 nice ;
 Not a penny piece had he,
 And scarce a shilling might suffice ;
 No wonder that his soul was sad,
 When not one penny piece he had.

As he sat there thinking, moping,
 Because his Mother's wants were
 many,
 Wishing much but scarcely hoping
 To earn a shilling or a penny,
 A friendly neighbour passed him by,
 And questioned him, why did he cry.

Alas his trouble soon was told :

He did not cry for cold or hunger,
Though he was hungry both and
cold ;

He only felt more weak and
younger,
Because he wished so to be old
And apt at earning pence or gold.

Kindly that neighbour was, but poor,
Scant coin had he to give or
lend ;
And well he guessed there needed
more

Than pence or shillings to befriend
The helpless woman in her strait,
So much loved, yet so desolate.

One way he saw, and only one :
He would—he could—not give
the advice,
And yet he must : the widow's son
Had curls of gold would fetch their
price ;
Long curls which might be clipped,
and sold
For silver, or perhaps for gold.

Our Johnny, when he understood
Which shop it was that purchased
hair,
Ran off as briskly as he could,
And in a trice stood cropped and
bare,
Too short of hair to fill a locket,
But jingling money in his pocket.

Precious money—tea and bread,
Physic, ease, for Mother dear,
Better than a golden head :

Yet our hero dropped one tear
When he spied himself close shorn,
Barer much than lamb new-born.

His Mother throve upon the money,
Ate and revived and kissed her
son :

But oh when she perceived her
Johnny,

And understood what he had done
All and only for her sake,
She sobbed as if her heart must
break.

Before 1882.

'HOLLOW-SOUNDING AND MYSTERIOUS'

THERE'S no replying
To the Wind's sighing ;
Telling, foretelling,
Dying, undying,
Dwindling and swelling,
Complaining, droning,
Whistling and moaning,
Ever beginning,
Ending, repeating,
Hinting and dinning,
Lagging and fleeting ;—
We've no replying
Living or dying
To the Wind's sighing.

What are you telling,
Variable Wind-tone ?
What would be teaching,
O sinking, swelling,
Desolate Wind-moan ?
Ever for ever
Teaching and preaching,
Never, ah never
Making us wiser.
The earliest riser
Catches no meaning,
The last who hearkens
Garners no gleanings
Of wisdom's treasure,
While the world darkens.

Living or dying,
In pain, in pleasure,
We've no replying
To wordless, flying
Wind's sighing.

Before 1882.

MAIDEN MAY

MAIDEN May sat in her bower,
In her blush-rose bower in flower,
Sweet of scent ;
Sat and dreamed away an hour,
Half content, half discontent.

'Why should rose blossoms be born,
Tender blossoms, on a thorn,
Though so sweet ?
Never a thorn besets the corn,
Scentless, in its strength complete.

'Why are roses all so frail,
At the mercy of a gale,
Of a breath ?
Yet so sweet and perfect pale,
Still so sweet in life and death.'

Maiden May sat in her bower,
In her blush-rose bower in flower,
Where a linnet
Made one bristling branch the tower
For her nest and young ones in it.

'Gay and clear the linnet trills ;
Yet the skylark, only, thrills
Heaven and earth,
When he breasts the height, and fills
Height and depth with song and
mirth.

'Nightingales which yield to night
Solitary strange delight
Reign alone :
But the lark for all his height
Fills no solitary throne.

'While he sings, a hundred sing ;
Wing their flight, below his wing,
Yet in flight ;
Each a lovely joyful thing
To the measure of its delight.

'Why then should a lark be reckoned
One alone, without a second
Near his throne ?
He in skyward flight unslackened,
In his music, not alone.'

Maiden May sat in her bower ;
Her own face was like a flower
Of the prime,
Half in sunshine, half in shower,
In the year's most tender time.

Her own thoughts in silent song
Musically flowed along,
Wise, unwise,
Wistful, wondering, weak or strong :
As brook shallows sink or rise.

Other thoughts another day,
Maiden May, will surge and sway
Round your heart ;
Wake, and plead, and turn at bay,
Wisdom part, and folly part.

Time not far remote will borrow
Other joys, another sorrow,
All for you ;
Not to-day, and yet to-morrow
Reasoning false and reasoning
true.

Wherefore greatest ? Wherefore
least ?

Hearts that starve and hearts that
feast ?

You and I ?

Stammering Oracles have ceased,
And the whole earth stands at
'why ?'

Underneath all things that be
Lies an unsolved mystery ;
Over all
Spreads a veil impenetrably,
Spreads a dense unlifted pall.

Mystery of mysteries ;
This creation hears and sees
High and low :
Vanity of vanities ;
This we test and *this* we know.

Maiden May, the days of flowering
Nurse you now in sweet embowering,
Sunny days ;
Bright with rainbows all the
showering,
Bright with blossoms all the ways.

Close the inlet of your bower,
Close it close with thorn and flower,
Maiden May ;
Lengthen out the shortening hour,—
Morrrows are not as to-day.

Stay to-day which wanes too soon,
Stay the sun and stay the moon,
Stay your youth ;
Bask you in the actual noon,
Rest you in the present truth.

Let to-day suffice to-day :
For itself to-morrow may
Fetch its loss,
Aim and stumble, say its say,
Watch and pray and bear its cross.
Before 1882.

TILL TO-MORROW

LONG have I longed, till I am tired
Of longing and desire ;
Farewell my points in vain desired,

My dying fire ;
Farewell all things that die and fail
and tire.

Springtide and youth and useless
pleasure
And all my useless scheming,
My hopes of unattainable treasure,
Dreams not worth dreaming,
Glow-worms that gleam but yield no
warmth in gleaming,—

Farewell all shows that fade in
showing :
My wish and joy stand over
Until to-morrow ; Heaven is glowing
Through cloudy cover ;
Beyond all clouds loves me my
Heavenly Lover.

Before 1882.

DEATH-WATCHES

THE Spring spreads one green lap
of flowers
Which Autumn buries at the fall,
No chilling showers of Autumn
hours
Can stay them or recall ;
Winds sing a dirge, while earth lays
out of sight
Her garment of delight.

The cloven East brings forth the sun,
The cloven West doth bury him
What time his gorgeous race is run
And all the world grows dim ;
A funeral moon is lit in heaven's
hollow,
And pale the star-lights follow.
Before 1882.

TOUCHING 'NEVER'

BECAUSE you never yet have loved
me, dear,
Think you you never can nor
ever will?

Surely while life remains hope
lingers still,

Hope the last blossom of life's dying
year.

Because the season and mine age
grow sere,

Shall never Spring bring forth
her daffodil,

Shall never sweeter Summer feast
her fill

Of roses with the nightingales they
hear?

If you had loved me, I not loving
you,

If you had urged me with the
tender plea

Of what our unknown years to come
might do

(Eternal years, if Time should count
too few),

I would have owned the point
you pressed on me

Was possible, or probable, or true.

Before 1882.

BRANDONS BOTH.

OH fair Milly Brandon, a young
maid, a fair maid!

All her curls are yellow and her
eyes are blue,

And her cheeks were rosy red till a
secret care made

Hollow whiteness of their bright-
ness as a care will do.

Still she tends her flowers, but not
as in the old days,

Still she sings her songs, but not
the songs of old :

If now it be high Summer her days
seem brief and cold days,

If now it be high Summer her
nights are long and cold.

If you have a secret, keep it, pure
maid Milly ;

Life is filled with troubles and the
world with scorn ;

And pity without love is at best
times hard and chilly,

Chilling sore and stinging sore a
heart forlorn.

Walter Brandon, do you guess Milly
Brandon's secret?

Many things you know, but not
everything,

With your locks like raven's plumage,
and eyes like an egret,

And a laugh that is music, and
such a voice to sing.

Nelly Knollys, she is fair, but she is
not fairer

Than fairest Milly Brandon was
before she turned so pale :

Oh but Nelly's dearer if she be not
rarer,

She need not keep a secret or
blush behind a veil.

Beyond the first green hills, beyond
the nearest valleys,

Nelly dwells at home beneath her
mother's eyes :

Her home is neat and homely, not
a cot and not a palace,

Just the home where love sets up
his happiest memories.

Milly has no mother; and sad
beyond another
Is she whose blessed mother is
vanished out of call:
Truly comfort beyond comfort is
stored up in a mother
Who bears with all, and hopes
through all, and loves us all.

Where peacocks nod and flaunt up
and down the terrace,
Furling and unfurling their scores
of sightless eyes,
To and fro among the leaves and
buds and flowers and berries
Maiden Milly strolls and pauses,
smiles and sighs.

On the hedged-in terrace of her
father's palace
She may stroll and muse alone,
may smile or sigh alone,
Letting thoughts and eyes go wander-
ing over hills and valleys
To-day her father's, and one day
to be all her own.

If her thoughts go coursing down
lowlands and up highlands,
It is because the startled game
are leaping from their lair;
If her thoughts dart homeward to
the reedy river islands,
It is because the waterfowl rise
startled here or there.

At length a footfall on the steps:
she turns, composed and
steady,
All the long-descended greatness
of her father's house
Lifting up her head; and there
stands Walter keen and ready
For hunting or for hawking, a
flush upon his brows.

'Good-morrow, fair cousin.' 'Good-
morrow, fairest cousin:
The sun has started on his course,
and I must start to-day:
If you have done me one good turn
you've done me many a dozen,
And I shall often think of you,
think of you away.'

'Over hill and hollow what quarry
will you follow,
Or what fish will you angle for
beside the river's edge?
There's cloud upon the hill-top and
there's mist deep down the
hollow,
And fog among the rushes and
the rustling sedge.'

'I shall speed well enough be it
hunting or hawking,
Or casting a bait toward the
shyest daintiest fin.
But I kiss your hands, my cousin;
I must not loiter talking,
For nothing comes of nothing,
and I'm fain to seek and win.'

'Here's a thorny rose: will you
wear it an hour,
Till the petals drop apart still
fresh and pink and sweet?
Till the petals drop from the droop-
ing perished flower,
And only the graceless thorns are
left of it.'

'Nay, I have another rose sprung
in another garden,
Another rose which sweetens all
the world for me.
Be you a tenderer mistress and be
you a wariar warden
Of your rose, as sweet as mine,
and full as fair to see.'

'Nay, a bud once plucked there is
no reviving,
Nor is it worth your wearing now,
nor worth indeed my own ;
The dead to the dead, and the
living to the living.
It's time I go within, for it's time
now you were gone.'

'Good-bye, Milly Brandon, I shall
not forget you,
Though it be good-bye between
us for ever from to-day ;
I could almost wish to-day that I
had never met you,
And I'm true to you in this one
word that I say.'

'Good-bye, Walter. I can guess
which thornless rose you covet ;
Long may it bloom and prolong
its sunny morn :
Yet as for my one thorny rose, I do
not cease to love it,
And if it is no more a flower I
love it as a thorn.'

Before 1882.

A LIFE'S PARALLELS

NEVER on this side of the grave
again,
On this side of the river,
On this side of the garner of the
grain,
Never.

Ever while time flows on and on and
on,
That narrow noiseless river,
Ever while corn bows heavy-headed,
wan,
Ever.

Never despairing, often fainting,
rueing,
But looking back, ah never !
Faint yet pursuing, faint yet still
pursuing
Ever.

Before 1882.

AT LAST

MANY have sung of love a root of
bane :

While to my mind a root of balm
it is,

For love at length breeds love ;
sufficient bliss

For life and death and rising up
again.

Surely when light of Heaven makes
all things plain,

Love will grow plain with all its
mysteries ;

Nor shall we need to fetch from
over seas

Wisdom or wealth or pleasure safe
from pain.

Love in our borders, love within our
heart,

Love all in all, we then shall bide
at rest,

Ended for ever life's unending
quest,

Ended for ever effort, change,
and fear :

Love all in all ;—no more that better
part

Purchased, but at the cost of
all things here.

Before 1882.

GOLDEN SILENCES

THERE is silence that saith 'Ah me!'
 There is silence that nothing saith;
 One the silence of life forlorn,
 One the silence of death;
 One is, and the other shall be.

One we know and have known for
 long,
 One we know not, but we shall
 know,
 All we who have ever been
 born;
 Even so, be it so,—
 There is silence, despite a song.

Sowing day is a silent day,
 Resting night is a silent night;
 But whoso reaps the ripened
 corn
 Shall shout in his delight,
 While silences vanish away.
Before 1882.

IN THE WILLOW SHADE

I SAT beneath a willow tree,
 Where water falls and calls;
 While fancies upon fancies solaced
 me,
 Some true, and some were false.

Who set their heart upon a hope
 That never comes to pass
 Droop in the end like fading helio-
 trope,
 The sun's wan looking-glass.

Who set their will upon a whim
 Clung to through good and ill
 Are wrecked alike whether they sink
 or swim,
 Or hit or miss their will.

All things are vain that wax and
 wane,
 For which we waste our breath;
 Love only doth not wane and is not
 vain,
 Love only outlives death.

A singing lark rose toward the sky,
 Circling he sang amain;
 He sang, a speck scarce visible sky-
 high,
 And then he sank again.

A second like a sunlit spark
 Flashed singing up his track;
 But never overtook that foremost
 lark,
 And songless fluttered back.

A hovering melody of birds
 Haunted the air above;
 They clearly sang contentment with-
 out words,
 And youth and joy and love.

O silvery weeping willow tree
 With all leaves shivering,
 Have you no purpose but to shadow
 me
 Beside this rippled spring?

On this first fleeting day of Spring,
 For Winter is gone by,
 And every bird on every quivering
 wing
 Floats in a sunny sky;

On this first Summer-like soft day,
 While sunshine steeps the air,
 And every cloud has gat itself
 away,
 And birds sing everywhere.

Have you no purpose in the world
 But thus to shadow me
 With all your tender drooping twigs
 unfurled,
 O weeping willow tree ?

With all your tremulous leaves out-
 spread
 Betwixt me and the sun,
 While here I loiter on a mossy bed
 With half my work undone ;

My work undone, that should be
 done
 At once with all my might ;
 For after the long day and lingering
 sun
 Comes the unworking night.

This day is lapsing on its way,
 Is lapsing out of sight ;
 And after all the chances of the day
 Comes the resourceless night.

The weeping willow shook its head
 And stretched its shadow long ;
 The west grew crimson, the sun
 smouldered red,
 The birds forbore a song.

Slow wind sighed through the willow
 leaves,
 The ripple made a moan,
 The world drooped murmuring like
 a thing that grieves ;
 And then I felt alone.

I rose to go, and felt the chill,
 And shivered as I went ;
 Yet shivering wondered, and I
 wonder still,
 What more that willow meant ;

That silvery weeping willow tree
 With all leaves shivering,
 Which spent one long day over-
 shadowing me
 Beside a spring in Spring.

Before 1882.

FLUTTERED WINGS

THE splendour of the kindling day,
 The splendour of the setting
 sun,
 These move my soul to wend its
 way,
 And have done
 With all we grasp and toil amongst
 and say.

The paling roses of a cloud,
 The fading bow that arches
 space,
 These woo my fancy toward my
 shroud ;
 Toward the place
 Of faces veiled, and heads dis-
 crowned and bowed.

The nation of the steadfast stars,
 The wandering star whose blaze
 is brief,
 These make me beat against the
 bars
 Of my grief ;
 My tedious grief, twin to the life it
 mars.

O fretted heart tossed to and fro,
 So fain to flee, so fain to rest !
 All glories that are high or low,
 East or west,
 Grow dim to thee who art so fain to
 go.

Before 1882.

A FISHER-WIFE

THE soonest mended, nothing said ;
 And help may rise from east or
 west,
 But my two hands are lumps of
 lead,
 My heart sits leaden in my breast.
 O north wind, swoop not from the
 north,
 O south wind, linger in the south,
 Oh come not raving raging forth,
 To bring my heart into my mouth ;
 For I've a husband out at sea,
 Afloat on feeble planks of wood ;
 He does not know what fear may
 be ;
 I would have told him if I could.
 I would have locked him in my
 arms,
 I would have hid him in my
 heart ;
 For oh the waves are fraught with
 harms,
 And he and I so far apart !
Before 1882.

WHAT'S IN A NAME ?

WHY has Spring one syllable less
 Than any its fellow season ?
 There may be some other reason,
 And I'm merely making a guess ;
 But surely it hoards such wealth
 Of happiness, hope, and health,
 Sunshine and musical sound,
 It may spare a foot from its name,
 Yet all the same
 Superabound.

Soft-named Summer,
 Most welcome comer,

Brings almost everything
 Over which we dream or sing
 Or sigh ;
 But then Summer wends its way,
 To-morrow,—to-day,—
 Good-bye !

Autumn,—the slow name lingers,
 While we likewise flag ;
 It silences many singers ;
 Its slow days drag,
 Yet hasten at speed
 To leave us in chilly need
 For Winter to strip indeed.

In all-lack Winter,
 Dull of sense and of sound,
 We huddle and shiver
 Beside our splinter
 Of crackling pine,
 Snow in sky and snow on ground.
 Winter and cold
 Can't last for ever !
 To-day, to-morrow, the sun will shine,
 When we are old.
 But some still are young,
 Singing the song
 Which others have sung,
 Ringing the bells
 Which others have rung,—
 Even so !
 We ourselves, who else ?
 We ourselves long
 Long ago.
Before 1882.

MARIANA

NOT for me marring or making,
 Not for me giving or taking ;
 I love my Love and he loves not
 me,
 I love my Love and my heart is
 breaking.

Sweet is Spring in its lovely showing,
 Sweet the violet veiled in blowing,
 Sweet it is to love and be loved ;
 Ah sweet knowledge beyond my
 knowing !

Who sighs for love sighs but for
 pleasure,
 Who wastes for love hoards up a
 treasure ;
 Sweet to be loved and take no
 count,
 Sweet it is to love without measure.

Sweet my Love whom I loved to
 try for,
 Sweet my Love whom I love and
 sigh for,
 Will you once love me and sigh
 for me,
 You my Love whom I love and die
 for ?

Before 1882.

MEMENTO MORI

POOR the pleasure
 Doled out by measure,
 Sweet though it be, while brief
 As falling of the leaf ;
 Poor is pleasure
 By weight and measure.

Sweet the sorrow
 Which ends to-morrow ;
 Sharp though it be and sore,
 It ends for evermore :
 Zest of sorrow,
 What ends to-morrow.

Before 1882.

ONE FOOT ON SEA, AND ONE ON SHORE

‘Oh tell me once and tell me twice
 And tell me thrice to make it plain,
 When we who part this weary day,
 When we who part shall meet
 again.’

‘When windflowers blossom on the
 sea
 And fishes skim along the plain,
 Then we who part this weary day,
 Then you and I shall meet again.’

‘Yet tell me once before we part,
 Why need we part who part in
 pain ?
 If flowers must blossom on the sea,
 Why, we shall never meet again.

‘My cheeks are paler than a rose,
 My tears are saltier than the main,
 My heart is like a lump of ice
 If we must never meet again.’

‘Oh weep or laugh, but let me be,
 And live or die, for all’s in vain ;
 For life’s in vain since we must part,
 And parting must not meet again

‘Till windflowers blossom on the sea
 And fishes skim along the plain ;
 Pale rose of roses, let me be,—
 Your breaking heart breaks mine
 again.’

Before 1882.

A SONG OF FLIGHT

WHILE we slumber and sleep
 The sun leaps up from the deep—
 Daylight born at the leap !—
 Rapid, dominant, free,
 Athirst to bathe in the uttermost sea.

While we linger at play—
 If the year would stand at May!—
 Winds are up and away
 Over land, over sea,
 To their goal wherever their goal
 may be.

It is time to arise,
 To race for the promised prize,—
 The Sun flies, the Wind flies—
 We are strong, we are free,
 And home lies beyond the stars and
 the sea.

Before 1882.

BUDS AND BABIES

A MILLION buds are born that never
 blow,
 That sweet with promise lift a
 pretty head
 To blush and wither on a barren
 bed
 And leave no fruit to show.

Sweet, unfulfilled. Yet have I
 understood
 One joy, by their fragility made
 plain :
 Nothing was ever beautiful in vain,
 Or all in vain was good.

Before 1882.

BOY JOHNNY

'If you'll busk you as a bride
 And make ready,
 It's I will wed you with a ring,
 O fair lady.'

'Shall I busk me as a bride,
 I so bonny,
 For you to wed me with a ring,
 O boy Johnny?'

'When you've busked you as a bride
 And made ready,
 Who else is there to marry you,
 O fair lady?'

'I will find my lover out,
 I so bonny,
 And you shall bear my wedding-
 train,
 O boy Johnny.'

Before 1882.

SUMMER IS ENDED

To think that this meaningless thing
 was ever a rose,
 Scentless, colourless, *this!*
 Will it ever be thus (who knows?)
 Thus with our bliss,
 If we wait till the close?

Though we care not to wait for the
 end, there comes the end,
 Sooner, later, at last,
 Which nothing can mar, nothing
 mend :
 An end locked fast,
 Bent we cannot re-bend.

Before 1882.

PASSING AND GLASSING

ALL things that pass
 Are woman's looking-glass ;
 They show her how her bloom must
 fade,
 And she herself be laid
 With withered roses in the shade ;

With withered roses and the fallen
 peach,
 Unlovely, out of reach
 Of summer joy that was.

All things that pass
 Are woman's tiring-glass ;
 The faded lavender is sweet,
 Sweet the dead violet
 Culled and laid by and cared for yet ;
 The dried-up violets and dried
 lavender,
 Still sweet, may comfort her,
 Nor need she cry Alas !

All things that pass
 Are wisdom's looking-glass ;
 Being full of hope and fear, and still
 Brimfull of good or ill,
 According to our work and will ;
 For there is nothing new beneath
 the sun ;
 Our doings have been done,
 And that which shall be was.

Before 1882.

SŒUR LOUISE DE LA MISÉRICORDE

(1674)

I HAVE desired, and I have been
 desired :

But now the days are over of
 desire,
 Now dust and dying embers mock
 my fire :

Where is the hire for which my life
 was hired ?

Oh vanity of vanities, desire !

Longing and love, pangs of a
 perished pleasure,
 Longing and love, a disenkindled
 fire,

And memory a bottomless gulf
 of mire,
 And love a fount of tears outrunning
 measure :

Oh vanity of vanities, desire !

Now from my heart, love's deathbed,
 trickles, trickles,

Drop by drop slowly, drop by
 drop of fire,

The dross of life, of love, of spent
 desire :

Alas my rose of life gone all to
 prickles !

Oh vanity of vanities, desire !

Oh vanity of vanities, desire !

Stunting my hope which might
 have strained up higher,

Turning my garden-plot to barren
 mire ;

Oh death-struck love, oh disenkindled
 fire,

Oh vanity of vanities, desire !

Before 1882.

PASTIME

A BOAT amid the ripples, drifting,
 rocking ;

Two idle people, without pause or
 aim ;

While in the ominous West there
 gathers darkness

Flushed with flame.

A hay-cock in a hay-field, backing,
 lapping ;

Two drowsy people pillowed round-
 about ;

While in the ominous West across
 the darkness

Flame leaps out.

Better a wrecked life than a life so
aimless,
Better a wrecked life than a life so
soft :
The ominous West glooms thunder-
ing, with its fire
Lit aloft.
Before 1882.

BIRCHINGTON CHURCH- YARD

A LOWLY hill which overlooks a flat,
Half sea, half country side ;
A flat-shored sea of low-voiced
-creeping tide
Over a chalky weedy mat.

A hill of hillocks, flowery and kept
green
Round Crosses raised for hope,
With many-tinted sunsets where
the slope
Faces the lingering western sheen.

A lowly hope, a height that is but
low,
While Time sets solemnly,
While the tide rises of Eternity,
Silent and neither swift nor slow.
April 1882.

RESURGAM

FROM depth to height, from height
to loftier height,
The climber sets his foot and sets
his face,
Tracks lingering sunbeams to
their halting-place,
And counts the last pulsations of the
light.

Strenuous thro' day and unsurprised
by night
He runs a race with Time and
wins the race,
Emptied and stripped of all save
only Grace,
Will, Love, a threefold panoply of
might.
Darkness descends for light he
toiled to seek :
He stumbles on the darkened
mountain-head,
Left breathless in the unbreath-
able thin air,
Made freeman of the living and
the dead :—
He wots not he has topped the top-
most peak,
But the returning sun will find
him there.

Before 1883.

MICHAEL F. M. ROSSETTI

Born 22 April 1881 ; Died 24 January
1883.

I

A HOLY Innocent gone home
Without so much as one sharp
wounding word ;
A blessed Michael in heaven's lofty
dome
Without a sword.

2

Brief dawn and noon and setting
time !
Our rapid-rounding moon has
fled ;
A black eclipse before the prime
Has swallowed up that shining
head.

Eternity holds up her looking-glass :—

The eclipse of Time will pass,
And all that lovely light return to sight.

3

I watch the showers and think of flowers :

Alas my flower that shows no fruit!
My snowdrop plucked, my daisy shoot

Plucked from the root.

Soon Spring will shower, the world will flower,

A world of buds will promise fruit,
Pear-trees will shoot and apples shoot

Sound at the root,

Bud of an hour, far off you flower ;
My bud, far off you ripen fruit ;
My prettiest bud, my straightest shoot,

Sweet at the root.

4

The youngest bud of five,
The least lamb of the fold,
Bud not to blossom, yet to thrive
Away from cold :

Lamb which we shall not see
Leap at its pretty pranks,
Our lamb at rest and full of glee
On heavenly banks.

January 1883.

A WINTRY SONNET

A ROBIN said : 'The Spring will never come,
And I shall never care to build again.'

A Rosebush said : 'These frosts are wearisome,

My sap will never stir for sun or rain.'

The half Moon said : 'These nights are fogged and slow,

I neither care to wax nor care to wane.'

The Ocean said : 'I thirst from long ago,

Because earth's rivers cannot fill the main.—'

When Springtime came, red Robin built a nest,

And trilled a lover's song in sheer delight.

Grey hoarfrost vanished, and the Rose with might

Clothed her in leaves and buds of crimson core.

The dim Moon brightened. Ocean sunned his crest,

Dimpled his blue, yet thirsted evermore.

Before 1884.

ONE SEA-SIDE GRAVE

UNMINDFUL of the roses,

Unmindful of the thorn,

A reaper tired reposes

Among his gathered corn :

So might I, till the morn !

Cold as the cold Decembers,

Past as the days that set,

While only one remembers

And all the rest forget,—

But one remembers yet.

Spring 1884.

WHO SHALL SAY?

I TOILED on, but thou
 Wast weary of the way,
 And so we parted : now
 Who shall say
 Which is happier—I or thou ?

I am weary now
 On the solitary way :
 But art thou rested, thou ?
 Who shall say
 Which of us is calmer now ?

Still my heart's love, thou,
 In thy secret way,
 Art still remembered now :
 Who shall say—
 Still rememberest thou ?

Circa 1884.

ONE SWALLOW DOES NOT
MAKE A SUMMER

A ROSE which spied one Swallow
 Made haste to blush and blow :
 'Others are sure to follow' :
 Ah no, not so !
 The wandering clouds still owe
 A few fresh flakes of snow,
 Chill fog must fill the hollow,
 Before the bird-stream flow
 In flood across the main,
 And Winter's woe
 End in glad Summer come again.
 Then thousand flowers may blossom
 by the shore,—
 But that Rose never more.

Before 1886.

A FROG'S FATE

CONTEMPTUOUS of his home beyond
 The village and the village-pond,
 A large-souled Frog who spurned
 each byeway
 Hopped along the imperial highway.

Nor grunting pig nor barking dog
 Could disconcert so great a Frog.
 The morning dew was lingering yet,
 His sides to cool, his tongue to
 wet :
 The night-dew, when the night
 should come,
 A travelled Frog would send him
 home.

Not so, alas ! The wayside grass
 Sees him no more : not so, alas !
 A broad-wheeled waggon unawares
 Ran him down, his joys, his cares.
 From dying choke one feeble croak
 The Frog's perpetual silence broke:—
 'Ye buoyant Frogs, ye great and
 small,

Even I am mortal after all !
 My road to fame turns out a wry
 way ;
 I perish on the hideous highway ;
 Oh for my old familiar byeway !'

The choking Frog sobbed and was
 gone ;
 The Waggoner strode whistling on.
 Unconscious of the carnage done,
 Whistling that Waggoner strode
 on—
 Whistling (it may have happened so)
 'A froggy would a-wooing go.'
 A hypothetic frog trolled he,
 Obtuse to a reality.

O rich and poor, O great and small,
 Such oversights beset us all.
 The mangled Frog abides incog,
 The uninteresting actual frog :
 The hypothetic frog alone
 Is the one frog we dwell upon.

Before 1886.

‘THERE IS A BUDDING
 MORROW IN MIDNIGHT’

WINTRY boughs against a wintry
 sky ;
 Yet the sky is partly blue
 And the clouds are partly
 bright :—
 Who can tell but sap is mounting
 high
 Out of sight,
 Ready to burst through ?

Winter is the mother-nurse of Spring,
 Lovely for her daughter's sake,
 Not unlovely for her own :
 For a future buds in everything ;
 Grown, or blown,
 Or about to break.

Before 1890.

THE WAY OF THE WORLD

A BOAT that sails upon the sea,
 Sails far and far and far away :
 Who sail in her sing songs of glee,
 Or watch and pray.

A boat that drifts upon the sea,
 Silent and void to sun and air :
 Who sailed in her have ended glee
 And watch and prayer.

Circa 1890.

A HELPMEEET FOR HIM

WOMAN was made for man's delight ;
 Charm, O woman, be not afraid !
 His shadow by day, his moon by
 night,
 Woman was made.

Her strength with weakness is over-
 laid ;
 Meek compliances veil her might ;
 Him she stays by whom she is stayed.

World-wide champion of truth and
 right,
 Hope in gloom and in danger aid,
 Tender and faithful, ruddy and
 white,
 Woman was made.

Before 1891.

EXULTATE DEO

MANY a flower hath perfume for its
 dower,
 And many a bird a song,
 And harmless lambs milkwhite
 beside their dams
 Frolic along ;
 Perfume and song and whiteness
 offering praise
 In humble peaceful ways.

Man's high degree hath will and
 memory,
 Affection and desire,
 By loftier ways he mounts of prayer
 and praise ;
 Fire unto fire,
 Deep unto deep responsive, height
 to height,
 Until he walk in white.

Before 1891.

BROTHER BRUIN

A DANCING Bear grotesque and
funny
Earned for his master heaps of
money,
Gruff yet good-natured, fond of
honey,
And cheerful if the day was sunny.
Past hedge and ditch, past pond and
wood,
He tramped, and on some common
stood ;
There cottage children circling gaily,
He in their midmost footed daily.
Pandean pipes and drum and muzzle
Were quite enough his brain to
puzzle :
But like a philosophic bear
He let alone extraneous care
And danced contented anywhere.

Still, year on year, and wear and
tear,
Age even the gruffest bluffest bear.
A day came when he scarce could
prance,
And when his master looked askance
On dancing Bear who would not
dance.
To looks succeeded blows ; hard
blows
Battered his ears and poor old nose.
From bluff and gruff he waxed
curmudgeon ;
He danced indeed, but danced in
dudgeon,
Capered in fury fast and faster :—
Ah could he once but hug his master
And perish in one joint disaster !
But deafness, blindness, weakness
growing,
Not fury's self could keep him going.

One dark day when the snow was
snowing
His cup was brimmed to overflowing :
He tottered, toppled on one side,
Growled once, and shook his head,
and died.
The master kicked and struck in vain ;
The weary drudge had distanced
pain,
And never now would wince again.
The master growled : he might have
howled
Or coaxed—that slave's last growl
was growled.
So gnawed by rancour and chagrin
One thing remained: he sold the skin.

What next the man did is not worth
Your notice or my setting forth,
But hearken what befell at last.
His idle working days gone past,
And not one friend and not one
penny
Stored up (if ever he had any
Friends, but his coppers had been
many),
All doors stood shut against him, but
The workhouse door which cannot
shut.
There he droned on—a grim old
sinner,
Toothless and grumbling for his
dinner,
Unpitied quite, uncared for much
(The ratepayers not favouring such),
Hungry and gaunt, with time to
spare.
Perhaps the hungry gaunt old Bear
Danced back, a haunting memory.
Indeed I hope so : for you see
If once the hard old heart relented
The hard old man may have re-
pented.

Before 1892.

TO MY FIOR-DI-LISA

THE Rose is Love's own flower, and
 Love's no less
 The Lily's tenderness.
 Then half their dignity must Roses
 yield
 To Lilies of the field?
 Nay, diverse notes make up true
 harmony;
 All-fashioned loves agree:
 Love wears the Lily's whiteness, and
 Love glows
 In the deep-hearted Rose.
 1892.

TO-MORROW

PASSING away the bliss,
 The anguish passing away:
 Thus it is
 To-day.
 Clean past away the sorrow,
 The pleasure brought back to stay:
 Thus and this
 To-morrow.
Before 1893.

SLEEPING AT LAST

SLEEPING at last, the trouble and
 tumult over,
 Sleeping at last, the struggle and
 horror past,
 Cold and white, out of sight of friend
 and of lover,
 Sleeping at last.
 No more a tired heart downcast
 or overcast,
 No more pangs that wring or shifting
 fears that hover,
 Sleeping at last in a dreamless
 sleep locked fast.

Fast asleep. Singing birds in their
 leafy cover
 Cannot wake her, nor shake her
 the gusty blast.
 Under the purple thyme and the
 purple clover
 Sleeping at last.

Circa 1893.

POEMS FOR CHILDREN
AND MINOR VERSE

SONNETS

WRITTEN TO BOUTS-RIMÉS

I

AMID the shades of a deserted hall
 I stand and think on much that
 hath been lost.
 How long it is since other step
 has crost

R

This time-worn floor! This tapestry
 is all
 Worm-eaten; and these columns
 rise up tall
 Yet crumbling to decay; where
 banners tost
 Thin spiders' webs hang now;
 the bitter frost
 Has even killed the flowers upon
 the wall.

2 F

Yet once this was a home brimfull of
 life,
 Full of the hopes and fears and
 love of youth,
 Full of love's language speaking
 without sound :
 Here honour was enshrined and
 kindly truth ;
 Hither the young lord brought his
 blushing wife,
 And here the bridal garlands
 were unbound.

II

I SIT among green shady valleys
 oft,
 Listening to echo-winds sighing
 of woe ;
 The grass and flowers are strong
 and sweet below ;
 Yea I am tired, and the smooth turf
 is soft.
 I sit and think, and never look
 aloft,
 Save to the tops of a tall poplar-
 row
 That glisten in the wind, whisper-
 ing low
 Of sudden sorrow reaching those
 who laugh.
 A very drowsy fountain bubbles
 near,
 Catching pale sunbeams o'er it
 wandering ;
 Its waters are so clear the stones
 look through :
 Then, sitting by its lazy stream, I
 hear
 Silence more loud than any other
 thing,
 What time the trees weep o'er
 me honey-dew.

III

WOULDEST thou give me a heavy
 jewelled crown
 And purple mantle and em-
 broidered vest ?
 Dear Child, the colours of the
 glorious West
 Are far more gorgeous when the
 sun sinks down.
 The diadem would only make me
 frown
 With its own weight ; nay give
 me for my crest
 Pale violets dreaming in perfect
 rest,
 Or rather leaves withered to autumn
 brown.
 A purple flowing mantle would but
 hinder
 My careless walk, and an em-
 broidered robe
 Would shame me. What is
 the best man who stept
 On earth more than the naked
 worm that crept
 Over its surface ? Earth shall be a
 cinder ;
 Where shall be then the beauty
 of the globe ?

IV

I SAID within myself : ' I am a fool
 To sigh ever for that which being
 gone
 Cannot return : the sun shines as
 it shone ;
 Rejoice.'—But who can be made
 glad by rule ?
 My heart and soul and spirit are no
 tool
 To play with and direct ; my
 cheek is wan

With memory ; and ever and anon
I weep, feeling life is a weary school.
There is much noise and bustle in
the street ;

It used to be so, and it is so now ;
All are the same, and will be
many a year.

Spirit that canst not break and
wilt not bow,
Fear not the cold, thou who hast
borne the heat ;—

Die if thou wilt, but what hast
thou to fear ?

v

I SOUGHT among the living, and I
seek

Among the dead, for some to
love ; but few

I found at last, and those had
quite run through

Their store of love ; and friendship
is too weak,

Too cold for me ; yet will I never
speak,

Telling my heart-want to smooth
listeners who

Would wonder smiling ; I can
bear and do—

Hot shame shall dry no tears upon
my cheek.

So, when my dust shall mix with
other dust,

When I shall have found quiet in
decay,

And lie at ease and cease like
a mere thought,—

Those whom I loved, thinking
on me, shall not

Grieve with a measure, saying, ‘Now
we must

Weep for a little ere we laugh
to-day.’

vi

AH welladay and wherefore am I
here ?

I sit alone all day, I sit and think—

I watch the sun arise, I watch it
sink,

And feel no soul-light, though the
day is clear.

Surely it is a folly, it is mere

Madness, to stand for ever on the
brink

Of dark despair, and yet not break
the link

That makes me scorned who cannot
be held dear.

I will have done with it ; I will not
stand

And fear on without hope, and
tremble thus,

Look for the break of day and
miss it ever.

Although my heart be broken,
they shall never

Say, ‘She was glad to sojourn
among us,

Thankful if one would take her by
the hand.’

vii

AND is this August weather ? Nay,
not so.

With the long rain the cornfield
waxeth dark.

How the cold rain comes pouring
down ! and hark

To the chill wind whose measured
pace and slow

Seems still to linger, being loth to go.

I cannot stand beside the sea and
mark

Its grandeur—it’s too wet for that :
no lark

In this drear season cares to sing or
show.

And, since its name is August, all
men find

Fire not allowable; winter foregone
Had more of sunlight and of
glad warmth more.

I shall be fain to run upon the
shore

And mark the rain. Hath the
sun ever shone?

Cheer up! there can be nothing
worse to mind.

VIII

METHINKS the ills of life I fain
would shun;

But then I must shun life, which
is a blank.

Even in my childhood oft my
spirit sank,

Thinking of all that had still to be
done.

Among my many friends there is
not one

Like her with whom I sat upon
the bank

Willow-o'-ershadowed, from whose
lips I drank

A love more pure than streams that
sing and run.

But many times that joy has cost a
sigh;

And many times I in my heart
have sought

For the old comfort and not
found it yet.

Surely in that calm day when I
shall die

The painful thought will be a
blessed thought,

And I shall sorrow that I must
forget.

IX—THE PLAGUE

'LISTEN, the last stroke of death's
noon has struck—

The plague is come,' a gnashing
Madman said,

And laid him down straightway
upon his bed.

His writhed hands did at the linen
pluck;

Then all is over. With a careless
chuck

Among his fellows he is cast.
How sped

His spirit matters little: many
dead

Make men hard-hearted.— 'Place
him on the truck.

Go forth into the burial-ground and
find

Room at so much a pitful for so
many.

One thing is to be done; one
thing is clear:

Keep thou back from the hot un-
wholesome wind,

That it infect not thee.' Say, is
there any

Who mourneth for the multi-
tude dead here?

August 1848.

Xa

WOULD that I were a turnip white,
Or raven black,

Or miserable hack

Dragging a cab from left to
right;

Or would I were the showman of a
sight,

Or weary donkey with a laden
back,

Or racer in a sack,

Or freezing traveller on an Alpine
height ;
Or would I were straw-catching as
I drown
(A wretched landsman I who cannot
swim),
Or watching a lone vessel sink,—
Rather than writing: I would change
my pink
Gauze for a hideous yellow satin
gown
With deep-cut scalloped edges and
a rim.

x b

I FANCY the good fairies dressed in
white,
Glancing like moonbeams through
the shadows black,
Without much work to do for king
or hack.
Training perhaps some twisted
branch aright ;
Or sweeping faded autumn-leaves
from sight
To foster embryo life ; or binding
back
Stray tendrils ; or in ample bean-
pod sack
Bringing wild honey from the rocky
height ;
Or fishing for a fly lest it should
drown ;
Or teaching water-lily heads to
swim,
Fearful that sudden rain might
make them sink ;
Or dyeing the pale rose a
warmer pink ;
Or wrapping lilies in their leafy
gown,
Yet letting the white peep beyond
the rim.

Xc—VANITY FAIR

SOME ladies dress in muslin full and
white,
Some gentlemen in cloth succinct
and black ;
Some patronize a dog-cart, some
a hack,
Some think a painted clarence only
right.
Youth is not always such a pleasing
sight,
Witness a man with tassels on
his back ;
Or woman in a great-coat like a
sack
Towering above her sex with horrid
height.
If all the world were water fit to
drown,
There are some whom you would
not teach to swim,
Rather enjoying if you saw
them sink ;
Certain old ladies dressed in
girlish pink,
With roses and geraniums on their
gown :
Go to the Bason, poke them o'er
the rim.

Circa 1848.

TO LALLA

READING MY VERSES TOPSY-TURVY

DARLING little Cousin,
With your thoughtful look
Reading topsy-turvy
From a printed book

English hieroglyphics,
More mysterious
To you than Egyptian
Ones would be to us ;—

Leave off for a minute
 Studying, and say
 What is the impression
 That those marks convey.

Only solemn silence
 And a wondering smile :
 But your eyes are lifted
 Unto mine the while.

In their gaze so steady
 I can surely trace
 That a happy spirit
 Lighteth up your face ;

Tender happy spirit,
 Innocent and pure,
 Teaching more than science,
 And than learning more.

How should I give answer
 To that asking look ?
 Darling little Cousin,
 Go back to your book.

Read on : if you knew it,
 You have cause to boast :
 You are much the wiser
 Though I know the most.
24 January 1849.

TWO ENIGMAS

I

NAME any gentleman you spy,
 And there's a chance that he is I.
 Go out to angle, and you may
 Catch me on a propitious day.
 Booted and spurred, their journey
 ended,
 The weary are by me befriended.
 If roasted meat should be your wish,
 I am more needful than a dish.

I am acknowledgedly poor ;
 Yet my resources are no fewer
 Than all the trades—there is not one
 But I profess, beneath the sun.
 I bear a part in many a game ;
 My worth may change, I am the same:
 Sometimes, by you expelled, I roam
 Forth from the sanctuary of home.

2

Me you often meet
 In London's crowded street,
 And merry children's voices my
 resting-place proclaim.
 Pictures and prose and verse
 Compose me—I rehearse
 Evil and good and folly, and call
 each by its name.
 I make men glad, and I
 Can bid their senses fly,
 And festive echoes know me of Isis
 and of Cam.
 But give me to a friend,
 And amity will end,
 Though he may have the temper
 and meekness of a lamb.

Spring 1849.

TWO CHARADES

I

MY first is no proof of my second,
 Though my second's a proof of
 my first.
 If I were my whole, I should tell you
 Quite freely my best and my worst.
 One clue more :— If you fail to
 discover
 My meaning, you're blind as a
 mole ;
 But, if you will frankly confess it,
 You show yourself clearly my
 whole.

2

How many authors are my first !
 And I shall be so too
 Unless I finish speedily
 That which I have to do.

My second is a lofty tree
 And a delicious fruit ;
 This in the hot-house flourishes—
 That amid rocks takes root.

My whole is an immortal queen
 Renowned in classic lore :
 Her a god won without her will,
 And her a goddess bore.
Spring 1849.

A BOUTS-RIMÉS SONNET

So I grew half delirious and quite
 sick,
 And through the darkness saw
 strange faces grin
 Of monsters at me. One put
 forth a fin,
 And touched me clammily. I could
 not pick
 A quarrel with it : it began to lick
 My hand, making meanwhile a
 piteous din,
 And shedding human tears : it
 would begin
 To near me, then retreat. I heard
 the quick
 Pulsation of my heart, I marked the
 fight
 Of life and death within me.
 Then sleep threw
 Her veil around me ; but this
 thing is true.
 When I awoke the sun was at his
 height ;

And I wept sadly, knowing that
 one new
 Creature had love for me, and others
 spite.

24 September 1849.

PORTRAITS

AN easy lazy length of limb,
 Dark eyes and features from the
 South,
 A short-legged meditative pipe
 Set in a supercilious mouth :
 Ink and a pen and papers laid
 Down on a table for the night,
 Beside a semi-dozing man
 Who wakes to go to bed by light.

A pair of brothers brotherly,
 Unlike and yet how much the
 same
 In heart and high-toned intellect,
 In face and bearing, hope and
 aim :
 Friends of the selfsame treasured
 friends
 And of one home the dear delight,
 Beloved of many a loving heart,
 And cherished both in mine,
 Good-night.
 9 May 1853.

CHARON

IN my cottage near the Styx
 Co. and Charon still combine
 Us to ferry o'er like bricks
 In a boat of chaste design.
 Cerberus, thou triple fair,
 Distance doth thy charms impair :

Let the passage give to us
Charon, Co., and Cerberus.

CHORUS

Now the passage gives us to
Charon, Cerberus, and Co.

June 1853—Frome Selwood.

THE P.R.B.

I

THE two Rossettis (brothers they)
And Holman Hunt and John Millais,
With Stephens chivalrous and bland,
And Woolner in a distant land—
In these six men I awestruck see
Embodied the great P.R.B.
D. G. Rossetti offered two
Good pictures to the public view ;
Unnumbered ones great John Millais,
And Holman more than I can say.

William Rossetti, calm and solemn,
Cuts up his brethren by the column.

19 September 1853.

2

THE P.R.B. is in its decadence :

For Woolner in Australia cooks
his chops,

And Hunt is yearning for the
land of Cheops ;

D. G. Rossetti shuns the vulgar
optic ;

While William M. Rossetti merely
lops

His B's in English disesteemed
as Coptic ;

Calm Stephens in the twilight
smokes his pipe,

But long the dawning of his
public day ;

And he at last the champion
great Millais,
Attaining academic opulence,
Winds up his signature with
A.R.A.

So rivers merge in the perpetual
sea ;

So luscious fruit must fall when over-
ripe ;

And so the consummated P.R.B.

10 November 1853.

CHILD'S TALK IN APRIL

I WISH you were a pleasant wren,
And I your small accepted mate ;
How we'd look down on toilsome
men !

We'd rise and go to bed at eight
Or it may be not quite so late.

Then you should see the nest I'd
build,

The wondrous nest for you and
me ;

The outside rough perhaps, but
filled

With wool and down ; ah you
should see

The cosy nest that it would be.

We'd have our change of hope and
fear,

Small quarrels, reconcilements
sweet :

I'd perch by you to chirp and cheer,
Or hop about on active feet,
And fetch you dainty bits to eat.

We'd be so happy by the day,
So safe and happy through the
night,

We both should feel, and I should
say,

It's all one season of delight,
And we'll make merry whilst we may.

Perhaps some day there'd be an egg
When spring had blossomed from
the snow :
I'd stand triumphant on one leg ;
Like chanticleer I'd almost crow
To let our little neighbours know.

Next you should sit and I would sing
Through lengthening days of sunny
spring ;
Till, if you wearied of the task,
I'd sit ; and you should spread your
wing
From bough to bough ; I'd sit
and bask.

Fancy the breaking of the shell,
The chirp, the chickens wet and
bare,
The untried proud paternal swell ;
And you with housewife-matron
air
Enacting choicer pills of fare.

Fancy the embryo coats of down,
The gradual feathers soft and
sleek ;
Till clothed and strong from tail to
crown,
With virgin warblings in their
beak,
They too go forth to soar and
seek.

So would it last an April through
And early summer fresh with dew.—
Then should we part and live as
twain :

Love-time would bring me back to
you,
And build our happy nest again.
8 March 1855.

WINTER

SWEET blackbird is silenced with
chaffinch and thrush,
Only waistcoated robin still chirps
in the bush :
Soft sun-loving swallows have
mustered in force,
And winged to the spice-teeming
southlands their course.

Plump housekeeper dormouse has
tucked himself neat,
Just a brown ball in moss with a
morsel to eat :
Armed hedgehog has huddled him
into the hedge,
While frogs scarce miss freezing
deep down in the sedge.

Soft swallows have left us alone in
the lurch,
But robin sits whistling to us from
his perch :
If I were red robin, I'd pipe you a
tune
Would make you despise all the
beauties of June.

But, since that cannot be, let us
draw round the fire,
Munch chesnuts, tell stories, and
stir the blaze higher :
We'll comfort pinched robin with
crumbs, little man,
Till he sings us the very best song
that he can.

28 November 1856.

LOVE'S NAME

LOVE hath a name of Death :
He gives a breath

And takes away.
 Lo we, beneath his sway,
 Grow like a flower ;
 To bloom an hour,
 To droop a day,
 And fade away.

Circa 1869.

GOLDEN HOLLY

COMMON Holly bears a berry
 To make Christmas Robins merry :—
 Golden Holly bears a rose,
 Unfolding at October's close
 To cheer an old Friend's eyes and
 nose.

Circa 1872.

SING-SONG

A NURSERY RHYME BOOK

[N.B.—*The date of Sing-song as a whole is 'Before 1873': but a few of the compositions were written and inserted at a much later date. Those few are marked 'Before 1894.'*]

RHYMES DEDICATED
 WITHOUT PERMISSION
 TO THE BABY
 WHO SUGGESTED THEM

ANGELS at the foot,
 And Angels at the head,
 And like a curly little lamb
 My pretty babe in bed.

LOVE me,—I love you,
 Love me, my baby ;
 Sing it high, sing it low,
 Sing it as may be.

Mother's arms under you,
 Her eyes above you ;
 Sing it high, sing it low,
 Love me,—I love you.

My baby has a father and a mother,
 Rich little baby !
 Fatherless, motherless, I know an-
 other
 Forlorn as may be :
 Poor little baby !

OUR little baby fell asleep,
 And may not wake again
 For days and days, and weeks and
 weeks ;
 But then he'll wake again,
 And come with his own pretty look,
 And kiss Mamma again.

'KOOKOOROOKOO ! kookoorookoo !'
 Crows the cock before the morn ;
 'Kikirikee ! kikirikee !'
 Roses in the east are born.
 'Kookoorookoo ! kookoorookoo !'
 Early birds begin their singing ;
 'Kikirikee ! kikirikee !'
 The day, the day, the day is
 springing.

BABY cry—
 Oh fie !—
 At the physic in the cup :
 Gulp it twice
 And gulp it thrice,
 Baby gulp it up.

EIGHT o'clock ;
 The postman's knock !
 Five letters for Papa ;

One for Lou,
And none for you,
And three for dear Mamma.

BREAD and milk for breakfast,
And woollen frocks to wear,
And a crumb for robin redbreast
On the cold days of the year.

THERE'S snow on the fields,
And cold in the cottage,
While I sit in the chimney nook
Supping hot pottage.

My clothes are soft and warm,
Fold upon fold,
But I'm so sorry for the poor
Out in the cold.

DEAD in the cold, a song-singing
thrush,
Dead at the foot of a snowberry
bush,—
Weave him a coffin of rush,
Dig him a grave where the soft
mosses grow,
Raise him a tombstone of snow.

I DUG and dug amongst the snow,
And thought the flowers would never
grow ;
I dug and dug amongst the sand,
And still no green thing came to
hand.

Melt, O snow ! the warm winds
blow
To thaw the flowers and melt the
snow ;
But all the winds from every land
Will rear no blossom from the sand.

A CITY plum is not a plum ;
A dumb-bell is no bell, though
dumb ;
A party rat is not a rat ;
A sailor's cat is not a cat ;
A soldier's frog is not a frog ;
A captain's log is not a log.

YOUR brother has a falcon,
Your sister has a flower ;
But what is left for mannikin,
Born within an hour ?

I'll nurse you on my knee, my knee,
My own little son ;
I'll rock you, rock you, in my arms,
My least little one.

HEAR what the mournful linnets
say :
'We built our nest compact and
warm,
But cruel boys came round our way
And took our summerhouse by
storm.

'They crushed the eggs so neatly
laid ;
So now we sit with drooping
wing,
And watch the ruin they have made,
Too late to build, too sad to
sing.'

A BABY'S cradle with no baby in it,
A baby's grave where autumn
leaves drop sere ;
The sweet soul gathered home to
Paradise,
The body waiting here.

HOP-O'-MY-THUMB and little Jack
 Horner,
 What do you mean by tearing and
 fighting?
 Sturdy dog Trot close round the
 corner,
 I never caught him growling and
 biting.

HOPE is like a harebell trembling
 from its birth,
 Love is like a rose the joy of all the
 earth;
 Faith is like a lily lifted high and
 white,
 Love is like a lovely rose the world's
 delight;
 Harebells and sweet lilies show a
 thornless growth,
 But the rose with all its thorns excels
 them both.

O WIND, why do you never rest,
 Wandering, whistling to and fro,
 Bringing rain out of the west,
 From the dim north bringing
 snow?

CRYING, my little one, footsore and
 weary?
 Fall asleep, pretty one, warm on
 my shoulder:
 I must tramp on through the winter
 night dreary,
 While the snow falls on me colder
 and colder.

You are my one, and I have not
 another;
 Sleep soft, my darling, my trouble
 and treasure;

Sleep warm and soft in the arms of
 your mother,
 Dreaming of pretty things, dream-
 ing of pleasure.

GROWING in the vale
 By the uplands hilly,
 Growing straight and frail,
 Lady Daffadowndilly.

In a golden crown,
 And a scant green gown
 While the spring blows chilly,
 Lady Daffadown,
 Sweet Daffadowndilly.

A LINNET in a gilded cage,—
 A linnet on a bough,—
 In frosty winter one might doubt
 Which bird is luckier now.

But let the trees burst out in leaf,
 And nests be on the bough,—
 Which linnet is the luckier bird,
 Oh who could doubt it now?

WRENS and robins in the hedge,
 Wrens and robins here and there;
 Building, perching, pecking, flutter-
 ing,
 Everywhere!

MY baby has a mottled fist,
 My baby has a neck in creases;
 My baby kisses and is kissed,
 For he's the very thing for kisses.

WHY did baby die,
 Making Father sigh,
 Mother cry?

Flowers, that bloom to die,
Make no reply
Of 'why?'
But bow and die.

If all were rain and never sun,
No bow could span the hill;
If all were sun and never rain,
There'd be no rainbow still.

O WIND, where have you been,
That you blow so sweet?
Among the violets
Which blossom at your feet.

The honeysuckle waits
For Summer and for heat;
But violets in the chilly Spring
Make the turf so sweet.

BROWNIE, Brownie, let down your
milk,
White as swansdown and smooth as
silk,
Fresh as dew and pure as snow:
For I know where the cowslips blow,
And you shall have a cowslip wreath
No sweeter scented than your breath.

Before 1894.

ON the grassy banks
Lambkins at their pranks;
Woolly sisters, woolly brothers,
Jumping off their feet,
While their woolly mothers
Watch by them and bleat.

RUSHES in a watery place,
And reeds in a hollow;

A soaring skylark in the sky,
A darting swallow;
And where pale blossom used to
hang
Ripe fruit to follow.

MINNIE and Mattie
And fat little May,
Out in the country,
Spending a day.

Such a bright day,
With the sun glowing,
And the trees half in leaf,
And the grass growing.

Pinky white pigling
Squeals through his snout,
Woolly white lambkin
Frisks all about.

Cluck! cluck! the nursing hen
Summons her folk,—
Ducklings all downy soft,
Yellow as yolk.

Cluck! cluck! the mother hen
Summons her chickens
To peck the dainty bits
Found in her pickings.

Minnie and Mattie
And May carry posies,
Half of sweet violets,
Half of primroses.

Give the sun time enough,
Glowing and glowing,
He'll rouse the roses
And bring them blowing.

Don't wait for roses
Losing to-day,

O Minnie, Mattie,
And wise little May.

Violets and primroses
Blossom to-day
For Minnie and Mattie
And fat little May.

HEARTSEASE in my garden bed,
With sweetwilliam white and red,
Honeysuckle on my wall :—
Heartsease blossoms in my heart
When sweet William comes to call ;
But it withers when we part,
And the honey-trumpets fall.

‘ IF I were a Queen,
What would I do ?
I’d make you King,
And I’d wait on you.’

‘ If I were a King,
What would I do ?
I’d make you Queen,
For I’d marry you.’

WHAT are heavy ? sea-sand and
sorrow :
What are brief ? to-day and to-
morrow :
What are frail ? Spring blossoms
and youth :
What are deep ? the ocean and
truth.

STROKE a flint, and there is nothing
to admire :
Strike a flint, and forthwith flash
out sparks of fire.

Before 1894.

THERE is but one May in the year,
And sometimes May is wet and
cold ;

There is but one May in the year
Before the year grows old.

Yet though it be the chilliest May,
With least of sun and most of
showers,
Its wind and dew, its night and day,
Bring up the flowers.

THE summer nights are short
Where northern days are long :
For hours and hours lark after lark
Trills out his song.

The summer days are short
Where southern nights are long ;
Yet short the night when nightin-
gales
Trill out their song.

THE days are clear,
Day after day,
When April’s here,
That leads to May,
And June
Must follow soon :
Stay, June, stay !—
If only we could stop the moon
And June !

‘ TWIST me a crown of wind-flowers ;
That I may fly away
To hear the singers at their song,
And players at their play.’

‘ Put on your crown of wind-flowers :
But whither would you go ?’
‘ Beyond the surging of the sea
And the storms that blow.’

'Alas! your crown of wind-flowers
Can never make you fly:
I twist them in a crown to-day,
And to-night they die.'

BROWN and furry
Caterpillar in a hurry
Take your walk
To the shady leaf, or stalk,
Or what not,
Which may be the chosen spot.
No toad spy you,
Hovering bird of prey pass by you;
Spin and die,
To live again a butterfly.

A TOADSTOOL comes up in a
night,—
Learn the lesson, little folk:—
An oak grows on a hundred years,
But then it is an oak.

A POCKET handkerchief to hem—
Oh dear, oh dear, oh dear!
How many stitches it will take
Before it's done, I fear.

Yet set a stitch and then a stitch,
And stitch and stitch away,
Till stitch by stitch the hem is done—
And after work is play!

If a pig wore a wig,
What could we say?
Treat him as a gentleman,
And say 'Good-day.'

If his tail chanced to fail,
What could we do?—
Send him to the tailoress
To get one new.

SELDOM 'can't,'
Seldom 'don't';
Never 'shan't,'
Never 'won't.'

1 and 1 are 2—
That's for me and you.

2 and 2 are 4—
That's a couple more.

3 and 3 are 6
Barley-sugar sticks.

4 and 4 are 8
Tumblers at the gate.

5 and 5 are 10
Bluff seafaring men.

6 and 6 are 12
Garden lads who delve.

7 and 7 are 14
Young men bent on sporting.

8 and 8 are 16
Pills the doctor's mixing.

9 and 9 are 18
Passengers kept waiting.

10 and 10 are 20
Roses—pleasant plenty!

11 and 11 are 22
Sums for brother George to do.

12 and 12 are 24
Pretty pictures, and no more.

How many seconds in a minute?
Sixty, and no more in it.

How many minutes in an hour ?
Sixty for sun and shower.

How many hours in a day ?
Twenty-four for work and play.

How many days in a week ?
Seven both to hear and speak.

How many weeks in a month ?
Four, as the swift moon runn'th.

How many months in a year ?
Twelve the almanack makes clear.

How many years in an age ?
One hundred says the sage.

How many ages in time ?
No one knows the rhyme.

WHAT will you give me for my
pound ?

Full twenty shillings round.
What will you give me for my
shilling ?

Twelve pence to give I'm willing.
What will you give me for my penny ?
Four farthings, just so many.

JANUARY cold desolate ;
February all dripping wet ;
March wind ranges ;
April changes ;
Birds sing in tune
To flowers of May,
And sunny June
Brings longest day ;
In scorched July
The storm-clouds fly
Lightning-torn ;
August bears corn,

September fruit ;
In rough October
Earth must disrobe her ;
Stars fall and shoot
In keen November ;
And night is long
And cold is strong
In bleak December.

WHAT is pink ? a rose is pink
By the fountain's brink.
What is red ? a poppy's red
In its barley bed.
What is blue ? the sky is blue
Where the clouds float thro' .
What is white ? a swan is white
Sailing in the light.
What is yellow ? pears are yellow,
Rich and ripe and mellow.
What is green ? the grass is green,
With small flowers between.
What is violet ? clouds are violet
In the summer twilight.
What is orange ? why, an orange,
Just an orange !

MOTHER shake the cherry-tree,
Susan catch a cherry ;
Oh how funny that will be,
Let's be merry !

One for brother, one for sister,
Two for mother more,
Six for father, hot and tired,
Knocking at the door.

A PIN has a head, but has no hair ;
A clock has a face, but no mouth
there ;
Needles have eyes, but they cannot
see ;
A fly has a trunk without lock or key ;

A timepiece may lose, but cannot win ;
 A corn-field dimples without a chin ;
 A hill has no leg, but has a foot ;
 A wine-glass a stem, but not a root ;
 A watch has hands, but no thumb
 or finger ;
 A boot has a tongue, but is no singer ;
 Rivers run, though they have no feet ;
 A saw has teeth, but it does not eat ;
 Ash-trees have keys, yet never a lock ;
 And baby crows, without being a
 cock.

HOPPING frog, hop here and be seen,
 I'll not pelt you with stick or
 stone :
 Your cap is laced and your coat is
 green ;
 Good-bye, we'll let each other
 alone.

Plodding toad, plod here and be
 looked at,
 You the finger of scorn is crooked at :
 But though you're lumpish, you're
 harmless too ;
 You won't hurt me, and I won't hurt
 you.

WHERE innocent bright-eyed daisies
 are,
 With blades of grass between,
 Each daisy stands up like a star
 Out of a sky of green.

THE city mouse lives in a house ;—
 The garden mouse lives in a
 bower,
 He's friendly with the frogs and
 toads,
 And sees the pretty plants in
 flower.

The city mouse eats bread and
 cheese ;—
 The garden mouse eats what he
 can ;
 We will not grudge him seeds and
 stalks,
 Poor little timid furry man.

WHAT does the donkey bray about ?
 What does the pig grunt through
 his snout ?
 What does the goose mean by a hiss ?
 Oh, Nurse, if you can tell me this,
 I'll give you such a kiss.

The cockatoo calls 'cockatoo,'
 The magpie chatters 'how d' ye do ?'
 The jackdaw bids me 'go away,'
 Cuckoo cries 'cuckoo' half the
 day :
 What do the others say ?

THREE plum buns
 To eat here at the stile
 In the clover meadow,
 For we have walked a mile.

One for you, and one for me,
 And one left over :
 Give it to the boy who shouts
 To scare sheep from the clover.

A MOTHERLESS soft lambkin
 Alone upon a hill ;
 No mother's fleece to shelter him
 And wrap him from the cold ;—
 I'll run to him and comfort him,
 I'll fetch him, that I will ;
 I'll care for him and feed him
 Until he's strong and bold.

DANCING on the hill-tops,
Singing in the valleys,
Laughing with the echoes,
Merry little Alice.

Playing games with lambkins
In the flowering valleys,
Gathering pretty posies,
Helpful little Alice.

If her father's cottage
Turned into a palace,
And he owned the hill-tops
And the flowering valleys,
She'd be none the happier,
Happy little Alice.

WHEN fishes set umbrellas up
If the rain-drops run,
Lizards will want their parasols
To shade them from the sun.

THE peacock has a score of eyes,
With which he cannot see ;
The cod-fish has a silent sound,
However that may be ;

No dandelions tell the time,
Although they turn to clocks ;
Cat's-cradle does not hold the cat,
Nor foxglove fit the fox.

PUSSY has a whiskered face,
Kitty has such pretty ways ;
Doggie scampers when I call,
And has a heart to love us all.

THE dog lies in his kennel,
And Puss purrs on the rug,
And baby perches on my knee
For me to love and hug.

Pat the dog and stroke the cat,
Each in its degree ;
And cuddle and kiss my baby,
And baby kiss me.

IF hope grew on a bush,
And joy grew on a tree,
What a nosegay for the plucking
There would be !

But oh in windy autumn,
When frail flowers wither,
What should we do for hope and joy,
Fading together ?

I PLANTED a hand
And there came up a palm,
'I planted a heart
And there came up balm.

Then I planted a wish,
But there sprang a thorn,
While heaven frowned with thunder
And earth sighed forlorn.

UNDER the ivy bush
One sits sighing,
And under the willow tree
One sits crying :—

Under the ivy bush
Cease from your sighing,
But under the willow tree
Lie down a-dying.

I AM a King,
Or an Emperor rather,
I wear crown-imperial
And prince's-feather ;

Golden-rod is the sceptre
 I wield and wag,
 And a broad purple flag-flower
 Waves for my flag.

Elder the pithy
 With old-man and sage,
 These are my councillors
 Green in old age ;
 Lords-and-ladies in silence
 Stand round me and wait,
 While gay ragged-robin
 Makes bows at my gate.

Before 1894.

THERE is one that has a head with-
 out an eye,
 And there's one that has an eye
 without a head :
 You may find the answer if you try ;
 And when all is said,
 Half the answer hangs upon a
 thread.

IF a mouse could fly,
 Or if a crow could swim,
 Or if a sprat could walk and talk,
 I'd like to be like him.

If a mouse could fly,
 He might fly away ;
 Or if a crow could swim,
 It might turn him grey ;
 Or if a sprat could walk and talk,
 What would he find to say ?

SING me a song.—
 What shall I sing ?—
 Three merry sisters
 Dancing in a ring,
 Light and fleet upon their feet
 As birds upon the wing.

Tell me a tale.—
 What shall I tell ?—
 Two mournful sisters,
 And a tolling knell,
 Tolling ding and tolling dong,
 Ding dong bell.

THE lily has an air,
 And the snowdrop a grace,
 And the sweetpea a way,
 And the heartsease a face,—
 Yet there's nothing like the rose
 When she blows.

MARGARET has a milking-pail,
 And she rises early ;
 Thomas has a threshing-flail,
 And he's up betimes.
 Sometimes crossing through the
 grass
 Where the dew lies pearly,
 They say ' Good-morrow ' as they
 pass
 By the leafy limes.

IN the meadow—what in the
 meadow ?
 Bluebells, buttercups, meadowsweet,
 And fairy rings for the children's
 feet
 In the meadow.

In the garden—what in the
 garden ?
 Jacob's-ladder and Solomon's-seal,
 And Love-lies-bleeding beside All-
 heal
 In the garden.

A FRISKY lamb
 And a frisky child

Playing their pranks
 In a cowslip meadow :
 The sky all blue
 And the air all mild
 And the fields all sun
 And the lanes half shadow.

MIX a pancake,
 Stir a pancake,
 Pop it in the pan ;
 Fry the pancake,
 Toss the pancake,—
 Catch it if you can.

THE wind has such a rainy sound
 Moaning through the town,
 The sea has such a windy sound,—
 Will the ships go down ?

The apples in the orchard
 Tumble from their tree.—
 Oh will the ships go down, go down,
 In the windy sea ?

THREE little children
 On the wide wide earth,
 Motherless children—
 Cared for from their birth
 By tender angels.

Three little children
 On the wide wide sea,
 Motherless children—
 Safe as safe can be
 With guardian angels.

FLY away, fly away over the sea,
 Sun-loving swallow, for summer is
 done ;
 Come again, come again, come back
 to me,
 Bringing the summer and bring-
 ing the sun.

MINNIE bakes oaten cakes,
 Minnie brews ale,
 All because her Johnny's coming
 Home from sea.
 And she glows like a rose,
 Who was so pale,
 And 'Are you sure the church clock
 goes ?'
 Says she.

A WHITE hen sitting
 On white eggs three :
 Next, three speckled chickens
 As plump as plump can be.

An owl and a hawk
 And a bat come to see ;
 But chicks beneath their mother's
 wing
 Squat safe as safe can be.

CURRENTS on a bush,
 And figs upon a stem,
 And cherries on a bending bough,
 And Ned to gather them.

PLAYING at bob cherry
 Tom and Nell and Hugh :
 Cherry bob ! cherry bob !
 There's a bob for you.

Tom bobs a cherry
 For gaping snapping Hugh,
 While curly-pated Nelly
 Snaps at it too.

Look, look, look—
 Oh what a sight to see !
 The wind is playing cherry bob
 With the cherry tree.

Before 1894.

I HAVE but one rose in the world,
And my one rose stands a-drooping :

Oh when my single rose is dead
There'll be but thorns for stooping.

ROSY maiden Winifred,
With a milkpail on her head,
Tripping through the corn,
While the dew lies on the wheat
In the sunny morn.
Scarlet shepherd's-weatherglass
Spreads wide open at her feet
As they pass ;
Cornflowers give their almond smell
While she brushes by,
And a lark sings from the sky
'All is well.'

BLIND from my birth,
Where flowers are springing
I sit on earth
All dark.
Hark ! hark !
A lark is singing,
His notes are all for me,
For me his mirth :—
Till some day I shall see
Beautiful flowers
And birds in bowers
Where all joy-bells are ringing.

Before 1894.

WHEN the cows come home the
milk is coming,
Honey's made while the bees are
humming ;
Duck and drake on the rushy lake,
And the deer live safe in the breezy
brake ;

And timid, funny, brisk little bunny
Winks his nose and sits all sunny.

ROSES blushing red and white,
For delight ;
Honeysuckle wreaths above,
For love ;
Dim sweet-scented heliotrope,
For hope ;
Shining lilies tall and straight,
For royal state ;
Dusky pansies, let them be
For memory ;
With violets of fragrant breath,
For death.

'DING a ding,'
The sweet bells sing,
And say,
'Come, all be gay,'
For a wedding day.

'Dong a dong,'
The bells sigh long,
And call,
'Weep one, weep all,'
For a funeral.

A RING upon her finger,
Walks the bride,
With the bridegroom tall and handsome
At her side.

A veil upon her forehead,
Walks the bride,
With the bridegroom proud and merry
At her side.

Fling flowers beneath the footsteps
Of the bride ;
Fling flowers before the bridegroom
At her side.

‘ FERRY me across the water,
Do, boatman, do.’
‘ If you’ve a penny in your purse
I’ll ferry you.’

‘ I have a penny in my purse,
And my eyes are blue ;
So ferry me across the water,
Do, boatman, do.’

‘ Step into my ferry-boat,
Be they black or blue,
And for the penny in your purse
I’ll ferry you.’

WHEN a mounting skylark sings
In the sunlit summer morn,
I know that heaven is up on high,
And on earth are fields of corn.

But when a nightingale sings
In the moonlit summer even,
I know not if earth is merely earth,
Only that heaven is heaven.

WHO has seen the wind ?
Neither I nor you :
But when the leaves hang trembling
The wind is passing thro’.

Who has seen the wind ?
Neither you nor I :
But when the trees bow down their
heads
The wind is passing by.

THE horses of the sea
Rear a foaming crest,
But the horses of the land
Serve us the best.

The horses of the land
Munch corn and clover,
While the foaming sea-horses
Toss and turn over.

O SAILOR, come ashore,
What have you brought for
me ?
Red coral, white coral,
Coral from the sea.

I did not dig it from the ground,
Nor pluck it from a tree ;
Feeble insects made it
In the stormy sea.

A DIAMOND or a coal ?
A diamond, if you please :
Who cares about a clumsy coal
Beneath the summer trees ?

A diamond or a coal ?
A coal, sir, if you please :
One comes to care about the coal
What time the waters freeze.

AN emerald is as green as grass ;
A ruby red as blood ;
A sapphire shines as blue as heaven ;
A flint lies in the mud.

A diamond is a brilliant stone,
To catch the world’s desire ;
An opal holds a fiery spark ;
But a flint holds fire.

BOATS sail on the rivers,
And ships sail on the seas ;
But clouds that sail across the sky
Are prettier far than these.

There are bridges on the rivers,
As pretty as you please ;
But the bow that bridges heaven,
And overtops the trees,
And builds a road from earth to sky,
Is prettier far than these.

THE lily has a smooth stalk,
Will never hurt your hand ;
But the rose upon her briar
Is lady of the land.

There's sweetness in an apple tree,
And profit in the corn ;
But lady of all beauty
Is a rose upon a thorn.

When with moss and honey
She tips her bending briar,
And half unfolds her glowing heart,
She sets the world on fire.

HURT no living thing :
Ladybird, nor butterfly,
Nor moth with dusty wing,
Nor cricket chirping cheerily,
Nor grasshopper so light of leap,
Nor dancing gnat, nor beetle fat,
Nor harmless worms that creep.

I CAUGHT a little ladybird
That flies far away ;
I caught a little lady wife
That is both staid and gay.

Come back, my scarlet ladybird,
Back from far away ;
I weary of my dolly wife,
My wife that cannot play.

She's such a senseless wooden thing
She stares the livelong day ;
Her wig of gold is stiff and cold
And cannot change to grey.
Before 1873 and 1894.

ALL the bells were ringing
And all the birds were singing,
When Molly sat down crying
For her broken doll :
O you silly Moll !
Sobbing and sighing
For a broken doll,
When all the bells are ringing
And all the birds are singing.

WEE wee husband,
Give me some money,
I have no comfits,
And I have no honey.

Wee wee wife,
I have no money,
Milk, nor meat, nor bread to eat,
Comfits, nor honey.

I HAVE a little husband
And he is gone to sea ;
The winds that whistle round his
ship
Fly home to me.

The winds that sigh about me
Return again to him ;
So I would fly, if only I
Were light of limb.
Before 1873 and 1894.

THE dear old woman in the lane
Is sick and sore with pains and
aches,
We'll go to her this afternoon,
And take her tea and eggs and
cakes.

We'll stop to make the kettle boil,
And brew some tea, and set the
tray,
And poach an egg, and toast a cake,
And wheel her chair round, if we
may.

Before 1873 and 1894.

SWIFT and sure the swallow,
Slow and sure the snail:
Slow and sure may miss his way,
Swift and sure may fail.

'I DREAMT I caught a little owl
And the bird was blue—'

'But you may hunt for ever
And not find such an one.'

'I dreamt I set a sunflower,
And red as blood it grew—'

'But such a sunflower never
Bloomed beneath the sun.'

WHAT does the bee do?
Bring home honey.
And what does Father do?
Bring home money.
And what does Mother do?
Lay out the money.
And what does baby do?
Eat up the honey.

I HAVE a Poll parrot,
And Poll is my doll,
And my nurse is Polly,
And my sister Poll.

'Polly!' cried Polly,
'Don't tear Polly dolly'—
While soft-hearted Poll
Trembled for the doll.

Before 1873 and 1894.

A HOUSE of cards
Is neat and small:
Shake the table,
It must fall.

Find the Court cards
One by one;
Raise it, roof it,—
Now it's done:—
Shake the table!
That's the fun.

THE rose with such a bonny blush,
What has the rose to blush about?
If it's the sun that makes her flush,
What's in the sun to flush about?

THE rose that blushes rosy red,
She must hang her head;
The lily that blows spotless white,
She may stand upright.

OH fair to see
Bloom-laden cherry tree,
Arrayed in sunny white,
An April day's delight;
Oh fair to see!

Oh fair to see
Fruit-laden cherry tree,

With balls of shining red
 Decking a leafy head ;
 Oh fair to see !

CLEVER little Willie wee,
 Bright-eyed, blue-eyed little fellow ;
 Merry little Margery
 With her hair all yellow.

Little Willie in his heart
 Is a sailor on the sea,
 And he often cons a chart
 With sister Margery.
Before 1873 and 1894.

THE peach tree on the southern wall
 Has basked so long beneath the
 sun,
 Her score of peaches great and small
 Bloom rosy, every one.

A peach for brothers, one for each,
 A peach for you and a peach for
 me ;
 But the biggest, rosiest, downiest
 peach
 For Grandmamma with her tea.
Before 1873 and 1894.

A ROSE has thorns as well as honey,
 I'll not have her for love or money ;
 An iris grows so straight and fine
 That she shall be no friend of mine ;
 Snowdrops like the snow would chill
 me ;
 Nightshade would caress and kill
 me ;
 Crocus like a spear would fright
 me ;
 Dragon's-mouth might bark or bite
 me ;

Convolvulus but blooms to die ;
 A wind-flower suggests a sigh ;
 Love-lies-bleeding makes me sad ;
 And poppy-juice would drive me
 mad :—

But give me holly, bold and jolly,
 Honest, prickly, shining holly ;
 Pluck me holly leaf and berry
 For the day when I make merry.

Is the moon tired? she looks so
 pale
 Within her misty veil :
 She scales the sky from east to
 west,
 And takes no rest.

Before the coming of the night
 The moon shows papery white ;
 Before the dawning of the day
 She fades away.

IF stars dropped out of heaven,
 And if flowers took their place,
 The sky would still look very fair,
 And fair earth's face.

Winged angels might fly down to us
 To pluck the stars,
 But we could only long for flowers
 Beyond the cloudy bars.

'GOOD-BYE in fear, good-bye in
 sorrow,
 Goodbye, and all in vain,
 Never to meet again, my dear'—
 'Never to part again.'
 'Good-bye to-day, good-bye to-
 morrow,
 Good-bye till earth shall wane,
 Never to meet again, my dear'—
 'Never to part again.'

IF the sun could tell us half
 That he hears and sees,
 Sometimes he would make us laugh,
 Sometimes make us cry :
 Think of all the birds that make
 Homes among the trees ;
 Think of cruel boys who take
 Birds that cannot fly.

IF the moon came from heaven,
 Talking all the way,
 What could she have to tell us,
 And what could she say ?

‘I’ve seen a hundred pretty things,
 And seen a hundred gay ;
 But only think : I peep by night
 And do not peep by day !’

O LADY Moon, your horns point to-
 ward the east ;
 Shine, be increased :
 O Lady Moon, your horns point to-
 ward the west ;
 Wane, be at rest.

WHAT do the stars do
 Up in the sky,
 Higher than the wind can blow,
 Or the clouds can fly ?

Each star in its own glory
 Circles, circles still ;
 As it was lit to shine and set,
 And do its Maker’s will.

MOTHERLESS baby and babyless
 mother,
 Bring them together to love one
 another.

CRIMSON curtains round my mother’s
 bed,
 Silken soft as may be ;
 Cool white curtains round about my
 bed,
 For I am but a baby.

BABY lies so fast asleep
 That we cannot wake her :
 Will the Angels clad in white
 Fly from heaven to take her ?

Baby lies so fast asleep
 That no pain can grieve her ;
 Put a snowdrop in her hand,
 Kiss her once and leave her.

I KNOW a baby, such a baby,—
 Round blue eyes and cheeks of
 pink,
 Such an elbow furrowed with dimples,
 Such a wrist where creases sink.

‘Cuddle and love me, cuddle and
 love me,’
 Crows the mouth of coral pink :
 Oh the bald head, and oh the sweet
 lips,
 And oh the sleepy eyes that wink !

LULLABY, oh lullaby !
 Flowers are closed and lambs are
 sleeping ;
 Lullaby, oh lullaby !
 Stars are up, the moon is peeping ;
 Lullaby, oh lullaby !
 While the birds are silence keeping,
 (Lullaby, oh lullaby !)
 Sleep, my baby, fall a-sleeping,
 Lullaby, oh lullaby !

LIE a-bed,
Sleepy head,
Shut up eyes, bo-peep ;
Till day-break
Never wake :—
Baby, sleep.

AN ALPHABET

A is the Alphabet, A at its head ;
A is an Antelope, agile to run.
B is the Baker Boy bringing the bread,
Or black Bear and brown Bear,
both begging for bun.
C is a Cornflower come with the corn ;
C is a Cat with a comical look.
D is a dinner which Dahlias adorn ;
D is a Duchess who dines with a Duke.
E is an elegant eloquent Earl ;
E is an Egg whence an Eaglet emerges.
F is a Falcon, with feathers to furl ;
F is a Fountain of full foaming surges.
G is the Gander, the Gosling, the Goose ;
G is a Garnet in girdle of gold.
H is a Heartsease, harmonious of hues ;
H is a huge Hammer, heavy to hold.
I is an Idler who idles on ice ;
I am I—who will say I am not I ?
J is a Jacinth, a jewel of price ;
J is a Jay, full of joy in July

K is a King, or a Kaiser still higher ;
K is a Kitten, or quaint Kangaroo.
L is a Lute or a lovely-toned Lyre ;
L is a Lily all laden with dew.
M is a Meadow where Meadowsweet blows ;
M is a Mountain made dim by a mist.
N is a nut—in a nutshell it grows—
Or a Nest full of Nightingales singing—oh list !
O is an Opal, with only one spark ;
O is an Olive, with oil on its skin.
P is a Pony, a pet in a park ;
P is the Point of a Pen or a Pin.
Q is a Quail, quick-chirping at morn ;
Q is a Quince quite ripe and near dropping.
R is a Rose, rosy red on a thorn ;
R is a red-breasted Robin come hopping.
S is a Snow-storm that sweeps o'er the Sea ;
S is the Song that the swift Swallows sing.
T is the Tea-table set out for Tea ;
T is a Tiger with terrible spring.
U, the Umbrella, went up in a shower ;
Or Unit is useful with ten to unite.
V is a Violet veined in the flower ;
V is a Viper of venomous bite.
W stands for the water-bred Whale—
Stands for the wonderful Wax-work so gay.
X, or **XX**, or **XXX**, is ale,
Or Policeman **X**, exercised day after day.

Y is a yellow Yacht, yellow its boat ;
Y is the Yacca, the Yam, or the Yew.

Z is a Zebra, zigzagged his coat,
 Or Zebu, or Zoöphyte, seen at the Zoo.

Circa 1875.

HADRIAN'S DEATH-SONG TRANSLATED

SOUL rudderless, unbraced,
 The body's friend and guest,
 Whither away to-day ?
 Unsuppled, pale, discased,
 Dumb to thy wonted jest.

16 March 1876.

MY MOUSE

A VENUS seems my Mouse
 Come safe ashore from foaming
 seas,
 Which in a small way and at ease
 Keeps house.

An Iris seems my Mouse,
 Bright bow of that exhausted shower
 Which made a world of sweet herbs
 flower
 And boughs.

A darling Mouse it is :—
 Part hope not likely to take wing,
 Part memory, part anything
 You please.

Venus-cum-Iris Mouse,
 From shifting tides set safe apart,
 In no mere bottle, in my heart
 Keep house.

New Year 1877.

A POOR OLD DOG

PITY the sorrows of a poor old dog
 Who wags his tail a-begging in
 his need ;

Despise not even the sorrows of a
 frog,

God's creature too, and that's
 enough to plead ;

Spare puss who trusts us purring on
 our hearth ;

Spare bunny, once so frisky and
 so free ;

Spare all the harmless creatures of
 the earth :

Spare, and be spared—or who
 shall plead for thee ?

Circa 1879.

TO WILLIAM BELL SCOTT

My old admiration before I was
 twenty

Is predilect still, now promoted to
 se'enty.

My own demi-century plus an odd one
 Some weight to my judgment
 may fairly impart.

Accept this faint flash of a smoulder-
 ing fun,

The fun of a heavy old heart.

Spring 1882.

COUNTERBLAST ON PENNY TRUMPET

IF Mr. Bright retiring does not
 please,

And Mr. Gladstone staying gives
 offence,

What can man do which is not one
 of these ?

Use your own common sense.

Yet he's a brave man who abjures
his cause

For conscience' sake : let bygones
be bygones :

Not *this* among the makers of our
laws

The least and last of Johns.

If all our bygones could be piled
on shelves

High out of reach of penny-line
Tyrtaeus !

If only all of us could see ourselves
As others see us !

21 July 1882.

MOLE AND EARTHWORM

A HANDY Mole, who plied no shovel
To excavate his vaulted hovel,

While hard at work met in mid-
furrow

An Earthworm boring out his burrow.
Our Mole had dined, and must grow
thinner

Before he gulped a second dinner,
And on no other terms cared he
To meet a Worm of low degree.

The Mole turned-on his blindest
eye,

Passing that base mechanic by.

The Worm, intrenched in actual
blindness,

Ignored or kindness or unkindness.

Each wrought his own exclusive
tunnel,

To reach his own exclusive funnel.

A plough, its flawless track pursuing,
Involved them in one common ruin.

Where now the mine and counter-
mine,

The dined-on and the one to dine ?

The impartial ploughshare of ex-
tinction

Annulled them all without distinction.

Before 1886.

TO MARY ROSSETTI

YOU were born in the Spring
When the pretty birds sing

In sunbeamy bowers :

Then dress like a Fairy,

Dear dumpling my Mary,

In green and in flowers.

Circa 1887.

WHAT WILL IT BE ?

WHAT will it be, O my soul, what
will it be,

To touch the long-raced-for goal, to
handle and see,

To rest in the joy of joys, in the joy
of the blest,

To rest and revive and rejoice, to
rejoice and to rest ?

Before 1893.

SPEECHLESS

LORD, Thou art fullness, I am
emptiness :

Yet hear my heart speak in its
speechlessness,

Extolling Thine unuttered loveliness.

Before 1893.

PLEADING

O LORD, I cannot plead my love of
Thee :

I plead Thy Love of me :—

The shallow conduit hails the un-
fathomed sea.

Before 1893.

A SORROWFUL SIGH OF A PRISONER

LORD, comest Thou to me?
My heart is cold and dead.
Alas that such a heart should be
The place to lay Thy head!

Before 1893.

SCARLET

'I SIT a queen, and am no widow,
and shall see no sorrow.'
Yea, Scarlet Woman, to-day, but not
yea at all to-morrow.
Scarlet Queen on a scarlet throne
all to-day without sorrow,
Bethink thee—to-day must end, there
is no end of to-morrow.

Before 1893.

HOMEWARDS

LOVE builds a nest on earth and
waits for rest,
Love sends to heaven the warm
heart from its breast,
Looks to be blest and is already
blest,
And testifies, 'God's will is always
best.'

Before 1893.

COUPLET

FAITH and Hope are wings to Love,
Silver wings to golden Dove.

Before 1893.

ITALIAN POEMS

VERSI

FIGLIA, la Madre disse,
Guardati dall' Amore :
È crudo, è traditore—
Che vuoi saper di più?
Non fargli mai sperare
D' entrare nel tuo petto,
Chè chi gli dà ricetta
Sempre tradito fu.

Colla sua benda al ciglio
È un bel fanciullo, è vero :
Ma sempre è menzognero,
Ma sempre tradirà.
Semplice tu se fidi
Nel riso suo fallace ;
Tu perderai la pace,
Nè mai ritornerà.

Ma vedo—già sei stanca
Del mio parlar prudente ;
Già volgi nella mente
Il quando, il come, e il chi.
Odimi : i detti miei
Già sai se son sinceri—
E se son falsi o veri
Saprai per prova un dì.

6 Ottobre 1849.

L'INCOGNITA

NOBIL rosa ancor non crebbe
Senza spine in sullo stelo :
Se vi fosse, allor sarebbe
Atta immagine di te.
È la luna in mezzo al cielo
Bella è ver ma passeggiava :
Passa ancor la primavera :—
Ah l'immagin tua dov' è ?

Circa 1850.

NIGELLA

PURPUREA rosa,
Dolce, odorosa,
È molto bella—
Ma pur non è,
O mia Nigella,
Rival di te.

Donna nel velo,
Fior sullo stelo,
Ciascun l' amore
Reclama a sè ;
Ma passa il fiore—
Tu resti a me.

Circa 1850.

CHIESA E SIGNORE

LA CHIESA

VOLA, preghiera, e digli
Perchè Ti stai lontano ?
Passeggi Tu frai gigli
Portando rosa in mano ?
Non Ti fui giglio e rosa
Quando mi amasti Tu ?
Rivolgiti alla sposa,
O mio Signor Gesù.

IL SIGNORE

Di te non mi scordai,
Sposa mia dolce e mesta :
Se Mi sei rosa il sai,
Chè porto spine in testa.
Ti diedi e core e vita,
Me tutto Io diedi a te,
Ed or ti porgo aita :
Abbi fidanza in Me.

LA CHIESA

Vola, preghiera, a Lui,
E grida : Ahi pazienza !

Te voglio e non altrui,
Te senza è tutto senza.
Fragrante più di giglio
E rosa a me sei Tu,
Di Dio l' Eterno Figlio,
O mio Signor Gesù.

Circa 1860.

IL ROSSEGGIAR DELL'
ORIENTE

Canzoniere all' Amico lontano.

I

AMOR DORMENTE ?

ADDIO, diletto amico ;
A me non lece amore,
Chè già m' uccise il core
Amato amante.
Eppur per l' altra vita
Consacro a te speranze ;
Per questa, rimembranze
Tante e poi tante.

Dicembre 1862.

2

AMOR SI SVEGLIA ?

IN nuova primavera
Rinasce il genio antico ;
Amor t' insinua ' Spera '—
Pur io nol dico.

S' ' Ama ' ti dice Amore,
S' ei t' incoraggia, amico,
Giurando ' È tuo quel core '—
Pur io nol dico.

Anzi quel cor davvero
Chi sa se valga un fico ?
Lo credo, almen lo spero :
Ma pur nol dico.

Gennaio 1863.

3

SI RIMANDA LA TOCCA-CALDAJA

LUNGI da me il pensiero
 D' ereditar l' oggetto
 Ch' una fiata in petto
 Destar ti seppe amor.
 Se più l' usar non vuoi,
 Se pur fumar nol puoi,
 Dolce ti sia dovere
 Il conservarlo ognor.

Circa 1864.

4

BLUMINE RISPONDE

S' IO t' incontrassi nell' eterna pace,
 Pace non più, per me saria
 diletto;
 S' io t' incontrassi in cerchio
 maledetto,
 Te più di me lamenterei verace.
 Per te mia vita mezzo morta giace,
 Per te le notti veglio e bagno il
 letto:
 Eppur di rivederti un dì m'
 aspetto
 In secol che riman, non che in
 fugace.
 E perciò 'Fuggi' io dico al tempo;
 e omai
 'Passa pur' dico al vanitoso
 mondo.
 Mentre mi sogno quel che dici e
 fai
 Ripeto in me, 'Doman sarà
 giocondo,
 Doman sarem'—ma s' ami tu lo
 sai,
 E se non ami a che mostrarti il
 fondo?

Gennaio 1867.

5

Lassù fia caro il rivederci.

DOLCE cor mio perduto e non
 perduto,
 Dolce mia vita che mi lasci in
 morte,
 Amico e più che amico, ti saluto.
 Ricordati di me; chè cieche e
 corte
 Fur le speranze mie, ma furon tue:
 Non disprezzar questa mia dura
 sorte.
 Lascia ch' io dica, 'Le speranze sue
 Come le mie languiro in questo
 inverno'—
 Pur mi rassegnèrò, quel che fue fue.
 Lascia ch' io dica ancor, 'Con
 lui discerno
 Giorno che spunta da gelata sera,
 Lungo cielo al di là di breve
 inferno,
 Al di là dell' inverno primavera.'

Gennaio 1867.

6

Non son io la rosa ma vi stetti appresso.

CASA felice ove più volte omai
 Siede il mio ben parlando e ancor
 ridendo,
 Donna felice che con lui sedendo
 Lo allegri pur con quanto dici e fai,
 Giardin felice dove passeggiavi
 Pensando a lui, pensando e non
 dicendo,—
 Giorno felice fia quand' io mi
 rendo
 Laddove passeggiando a lui pensai.
 Ma s' egli vi sarà quand' io vi
 torno,
 S' egli m' accoglie col suo dolce
 riso,

Ogni uccelletto canterà dintorno,
 La rosa arrossirà nel vago viso :—
 Iddio ci dia in eternità quel giorno,
 Ci dia per quel giardino il
 paradiso.

Aprile 1867.

7

Lassuso il caro Fiore.

SE t' insegnasse Iddio
 Il proprio Amor così,
 Ti cederei, cor mio,
 Al caro Fiore.
 Il caro Fior ti chiama,
 'Fammi felice un dì';—
 Il caro Fior che t' ama
 Ti chiede amore.

Quel Fiore in paradiso
 Fiorisce ognor per te ;
 Sì, rivedrai quel viso,
 Sarai contento :
 Intorno al duol ch' è stato
 Domanderai 'Dov' è?'
 Chè passerà il passato
 In un momento.

Ed io per tanta vista
 In tutta eternità,
 Io qual Giovan Battista
 Loderò Dio :
 L' Amata tanto amata
 Tuo guiderdon sarà,
 E l' alma tua salvata
 Sarammi il mio.

Aprile 1867.

8

SAPESSI PURE

CHE fai lontan da me,
 Che fai, cor mio ?
 Quel che facc' io
 È ch' ognor penso a te.

R

Pensando, a te sorrido,
 Sospiro a te :
 E tu lontan da me
 Tu pur sei fido ?

Maggio 1867.

9

IDDIO C' ILLUMINI

QUANDO il tempo avverrà che parti-
 remo
 Ciascun di noi per separata via,
 Momento che verrà, momento es-
 tremo

Quando che fia :

Calcando l' uno inusitata traccia,
 Seguendo l' altro il solito suo corso,
 Non ci nasca in quel dì vergogna in
 faccia

Nè in sen rimorso.

Sia che tu vada pria forte soletto,
 O sia ch' io ti preceda in quel
 sentiero,
 Deh ricordiamci allor d' averci detto
 Pur sempre il vero.

Quanto t' amavo e quanto ! e non
 dovea

Esprimer quell' amor che ti
 portavo :

Più ma assai più di quel che non
 dicea

Nel cuor ti amavo.

Più di felicità, più di speranza ;
 Di vita non dirò, chè è poca cosa :
 Dolce-amaro tu fosti in rimembranza
 A me gelosa.

Ma a me tu preferisti la virtude,
 La veritade, amico : e non saprai
 Chi amasti alfin ? Soltanto il fior si
 schiude

D' un sole ai rai.

2 G

Se più di me la Veritade amasti,
Gesù fu quel tuo sconosciuto
Amore :—

Gesù, che sconosciuto a lui parlasti,
Vincigli il core.

Maggio 1867.

IO

AMICIZIA

Sirocchia son d' Amor.

VENGA Amicizia e sia la benvenuta,
Venga, ma non perciò sen parta
Amore :

Abitan l' uno e l' altra in gentil
core

Che albergo ai pellegrini non rifiuta.
Ancella questa docile e compiuta,

E quei tiranno no ma pio signore :
Regni egli occulto nè si mostri
fuore,

Essa si sveli in umiltà dovuta.

Oggi ed ancor doman per l' amicizia,
E posdomani ancor se pur si vuole,
Chè dolci cose apporta e non
amare :

E venga poi, ma non con luna o
sole,

Giorno d'amor, giorno di gran delizia,
Giorno che spunta non per
tramontare.

Agosto 1867.

II

Luscious and sorrowful.

UCCELLO delle rose e del dolore,
Uccel d' amore,

Felice ed infelice, quel tuo canto
È riso o pianto ?

Fido all' infido, tieni in freddo lido
Spina per nido.

Agosto 1867.

12

O forza irresistibile
Dell' umile preghiera.

CHE Ti darò, Gesù Signor mio
buono ?

Ah quello ch' amo più, quello Ti
dono :

Accettalo, Signor Gesù mio Dio,
Il sol mio dolce amor, anzi il cor
mio ;

Accettalo per Te, siati prezioso ;
Accettalo per me, salva il mio
sposo.

Non ho che lui, Signor, nol dis-
prezzare,

Caro tienlo nel cor fra cose care.

Ricordati del dì che sulla croce
Pregavi Iddio così, con flebil voce,
Con anelante cor : ' Questo che
fanno,

Padre, perdona lor, ch' essi non
sanno.'

Ei pur, Signor, non sa Quello che
sdegna,

Ei pure T' amerà s' uno gl' insegna.
Se tutto quanto appar, che a Te non
piace,

Fugace spuma in mar, nebbia fugace ;
Successo o avversità, contento o
duolo,

Se tutto è vanità fuorchè Tu solo ;
Se chi non prega Te nel vuoto
chiama ;

Se amore amor non è che Te non
ama ;—

Dona Te stesso a noi, ricchi saremo ;
Poi nega quanto vuoi, chè tutto
avremo :

Di mel più dolce Tu, che ben ci
basti ;

D' amore amabil più, Tu che ci
amasti.

Settembre 1867.

13

FINESTRA MIA ORIENTALE

[IN MALATTIA]

VOLGO la faccia verso l' oriente,
Verso il meriggio, ove colui
dimora :—

Ben fai che vivi ai lati dell' aurora ;
Chi teco vive par felice gente.

Volgo verso di te l' occhio lan-
guente,

Lo spirito che teme e spera
ancora ;

Volgiti verso quella che ti onora,
T' ama, ti brama, in core e colla
mente.

Debole e stanca verso te mi volgo :
Che sarà mai questo che sento,
amico ?

Ogni cara memoria tua raccolgo,—
Quanto dirti vorrei ! ma pur nol
dico.

Lungi da te dei giorni me ne
dolgo :

Fossimo insieme in bel paese
aprico !

Fossimo insieme !

Che importerebbe

U' si facesse

Il nostro nido ?

Cielo sarebbe

Quasi quel lido.

Ah fossi teco,

Col cor ben certo

D' essere amato

Come vorrebbe !

Sì che il deserto

S' infiorirebbe.

Ottobre 1867.

14

EPPURE ALLORA VENIVI

O TEMPO tardo e amaro !—

Quando verrai, cor mio,

Quando, ma quando ?

Siccome a me sei caro

Se cara a te foss' io,

Ti andrei cercando ?

Febbrajo 1868.

15

PER PREFERENZA

FELICE la tua madre,

Le suore tue felici,

Che senton quanto dici,

Che vivono con te,

Che t' amano di dritto

D' amor contento e saggio :

Pur questo lor vantaggio

Non lo vorrei per me.

Quel grave aspetto tuo

Veder di quando in quando,

Frattanto andar pensando

' Un giorno riverrà ' ;

Ripeter nel mio core

(Qual rosa è senza spine ?)

' Ei sa che l' amo alfine—

M' ama egli ancor ? ' Chi sa ?

È questo assai più dolce

Dell' altro, al parer mio :

Essere in ver desio

O tutto o nulla ¹ a te ;

Nè troppo vo' lagnarmi

Ch' or stai da me diviso,

Se un giorno in Paradiso

Festeggerai con me.

Marzo 1868.

¹ Ma no ; se non amante siimi amico :
Quel ch' io sarò per te non tel predico.

16

OGGI

POSSIBIL non sarebbe
 Ch' io non t' amassi, O Caro :
 Chi mai si scorderebbe
 Del proprio core ?
 Se amaro il dolce fai,
 Dolce mi fai l' amaro ;
 Se qualche amor mi dai,
 Tì do l' amore.

Marzo 1868.

17

Ti do l' addio,
 Amico mio,
 Per settimane
 Che paion lunghe :
 Ti raccomando
 Di quando in quando
 Circoli quadri,
 Idee bislunghe.

Marzo 1868.

18

RIPETIZIONE

CREDEA di rivederti e ancor ti
 aspetto ;
 Di giorno in giorno ognor ti vo
 bramando :
 Quando ti rivedrò, cor mio diletto,
 Quando ma quando ?

Dissi e ridissi con perenne sete,
 E lo ridico e vo' ridirlo ancora,
 Qual usignol che canta e si ripete
 Fino all' aurora.

Giugno 1868.

19

Amico e più che amico mio.

COR mio a cui si volge l' altro mio
 core
 Qual calamita al polo, e non ti
 trova,
 La nascita della mia vita nuova
 Con pianto fu, con grida, e con
 dolore.
 Ma l' aspro duolo fummi precursore
 Di speranza gentil che canta e
 cova ;
 Sì, chi non prova pena amor non
 prova,
 E quei non vive che non prova
 amore.
 O tu che in Dio mi sei, ma dopo
 Iddio,
 Tutta la terra mia ed assai del
 cielo,
 Pensa se non m' è duol disotto a
 un velo
 Parlarti e non ti dir mai che ti
 bramo :—
 Dillo tu stesso a te, dolce cor mio,
 Se pur tu m' ami dillo a te ch' io
 t' amo.

Agosto 1868.

20

Nostre volontà quieti
 Virtù di carità.

VENTO gentil che verso il mezzodì
 Soffiando vai, deh porta un mio
 sospir,
 Dicendo ad Un quel che non
 debbo dir,
 Con un sospir dicendogli così :
 Quella che diede un ' No ' volendo
 un ' Sì '

(Volendo e non volendo—a che ridir?)

Quella ti manda : È vanità il fiorir
Di questa vita che meniam costì.

Odi che dice e piange : È vanità

Questo che nasce e muore amor
mondan ;

Deh leva gli occhi, io gli occhi
vo' levar,

Verso il reame dove non in van
Amasi Iddio quanto ognun
possa amar

Ed il creato tutto in carità.

Agosto 1868.

2 I

Se così fosse.

Io più ti amai che non mi amasti
tu :—

Amen, se così volle Iddio Signor ;

Amen, quantunque mi si spezzi il
cor,

Signor Gesù.

Ma Tu che Ti ricordi e tutto sai,

Tu che moristi per virtù d' amor,

Nell' altro mondo donami quel cor

Che tanto amai.

Agosto 1868.

L' UOMMIBATTO

O UOMMIBATTO,

Agil, giocondo,

Che ti sei fatto

Irsuto e tondo !

Deh non fuggire

Qual vagabondo,

Non disparire

Forando il mondo :

Pesa davvero

D' un emisfero

Non lieve il pondo.

1869.

COR MIO

COR mio, cor mio,

Più non ti veggo, ma mi ram-
mento

Del giorno spento,

Cor mio.

Pur ti ricordi del lungo amore,

Cor del mio core,

Cor mio ?

Circa 1870.

ADRIANO

ANIMUCCIA, vagantuccia, morbi-
duccia,

Oste del corpo e suora,

Ove or farai dimora ?

Palliduccia, irrigidita, svestituccia,

Non più scherzante or ora.

16 Marzo 1876.

NINNA-NANNA

I

[ANGELS AT THE FOOT]

ANGELI al capo, al piede ;

E qual ricciuto agnello

Dormir fra lor si vede

Il bel mio bambinello.

2

[LOVE ME, I LOVE YOU]

AMAMI, t' amo,

Figliolin mio :

Cantisi, suonisi,

Con tintinnio.

Mamma t' abbraccia,

Cor suo ti chiama ;

Suonisi, cantisi,

Ama chi t' ama.

3

[MY BABY HAS A FATHER AND
A MOTHER]

E BABBO e mamma ha il nostro
figliolino,
Ricco bambino.
Ma ne conosco un altro senza padre
E senza madre—
Il poverino !

4

[OUR LITTLE BABY FELL ASLEEP]

S' ADDORMENTÒ la nostra figliolina,
Nè si risveglierà
Per giorni e giorni assai sera o mat-
tina.
Ma poi si sveglierà,
E con cara ridente bocchettina
Ribacerà Mammà.

5

[KOOKOOROOKOO, KOOKOO-
ROOKOO]

CUCCURUCÙ—cuccurucù—
All' alba il gallo canta.
Chicchirichì—chicchirichì—
Di rose il ciel s' ammantava.
Cuccurucù—cuccurucù—
Comincia un gorgheggiare.
Chicchirichì—chicchirichì—
Risalta il sol dal mare.

6

[BABY CRY]

OHIBÒ piccina
Tutto atterrita !
La medicina
Bever si de' :
Uno, due, tre,
Ed è finita.

7

[EIGHT O'CLOCK]

OTTO ore suonano—
Picchia il postino :
Ben cinque lettere
Son per Papà ;

Una per te,
Nulla per me ;
E un bigliettino
V' è per Mammà.

8

[BREAD AND MILK FOR BREAK-
FAST]

NEL verno accanto al fuoco
Mangio la mia minestra,
E al pettirosso schiudo la finestra,
Ch' ei pur ne vuole un poco.

[OVVERO]

S'affaccia un pettirosso alla fin-
estra—
Vieni vieni a gustar la mia minestra.
Lana ben foderata io porto addosso,
Ma tu non porti che un corpetto
rosso.

9

[THERE'S SNOW ON THE FIELDS]

GRAN freddo è infuori, e dentro è
freddo un poco :
Quanto è grata una zuppa accanto
al fuoco !
Mi vesto di buon panno—
Ma i poveri non hanno
Zuppa da bere e fuoco a cui sedere,
O tetto o panni in questo freddo
intenso—
Ah mi si stringe il cor mentre io ci
penso.

10

[I DUG AND DUG AMONGST
THE SNOW]

SCAVAI la neve—sì che scavai—
Ma fior nè foglia spuntava mai.
Scavai la rena con ansia lena,
Ma fior nè foglia spicca da rena.
O vento aprico, con fiato lieve
Sveglia i fioretti, sgela la neve!
Ma non soffiare su quella rena: •
Chi soffia in rena perde la lena.

11

[YOUR BROTHER HAS A FALCON]

Sì che il fratello s' ha un falconcello,
E tiene un fior la suora:
Ma che, ma che riman per te,
Il neonato or ora?
Vo' farti cocchio del mio ginocchio,
Minor mio figliolino:
Da capo a piè ti stringo a me,
Minimo piccino.

12

[HEAR WHAT THE MOURNFUL
LINNETS SAY]

UDITE, si dolgono mesti fringuelli:—
Bel nido facemmo per cari gemelli,
Ma tre ragazzacci lo misero in stracci.
Fuggì primavera, s'imbruna la sera,
E tempo ci manca da fare un secondo
Niduncolo tondo.

13

[A BABY'S CRADLE WITH NO
BABY IN IT]

AHI culla vuota ed ahi sepolcro pieno
Ove le smunte foglie autunno
getta!

Lo spirito aspetta in paradiso ameno,
Il corpo in terra aspetta.

14

[O WIND, WHY DO YOU NEVER
REST?]

LUGUBRE e vagabondo in terra e in
mare,
O vento, O vento, a che non ti
posare?
Ci trai la pioggia fin dall' occidente,
E la neve ci trai dal nord fremente.

15

[O WIND, WHERE HAVE YOU
BEEN?]

'AURA dolcissima, ma donde siete?'
'Dinfra le mambole—non lo sapete?
Abbassi il viso ad adocchiar l' erbetta
Chi vuol trovar l' ascosa mammoletta.
La madreselva il dolce caldo aspetta:
Tu addolci un freddo mondo, O
mammoletta.'

16

[IF I WERE A QUEEN]

'FOSS' io regina,
Tu re saresti:
Davanti a te
M' inchinerei.'
'Ah foss' io re!
Tu lo vedresti:
Sì che regina
Mi ti farei.'

17

[WHAT ARE HEAVY? SEA-SAND
AND SORROW]

PESANO rena e pena:
Oggi e doman son brevi:

La gioventude e un fior son cose
lievi :

Ed han profondità
Mar magno e magna verità.

18

[A TOADSTOOL COMES UP IN
A NIGHT]

BASTA una notte a maturare il fungo ;
Un secol vuol la quercia, e non par
lungo :

Anzi il secolo breve e il vespro lungo,
Chè quercia è quercia, e fungo è
sempre fungo.

19

[IF A PIG WORE A WIG]

‘PORCO la zucca fitta in par-
ruca! . . .

Che gli diresti mai?’

‘M’ inchinerei, l’ ossequierei—

“Ser Porco, come stai?”’

‘Ahi guai per caso mai
Se la coda andasse a male?’ . . .

‘Sta tranquillo—buon legale
Gli farebbe un codicillo.’

20

[HOPPING FROG, HOP HERE AND
BE SEEN]

SALTA, ranocchio, e mostrati;
Non celo pietra in mano :
Merletto in testa e verde vesta,
Vattene salvo e sano.

Rospo lordo, deh non celarti :
Tutto il mondo può disprezzarti,
Ma mal non fai nè mal vo’ farti.

21

[WHERE INNOCENT BRIGHT-EYED
DAISIES ARE]

SPUNTA la margherita
Qual astro in sullo stelo,
E l’ erbetta infiorita
Rassembra un verde cielo.

22

[A MOTHERLESS SOFT LAMBKIN]

AGNELLINA orfanellina
Giace in cima alla collina,
Fredda, sola, senza madre,
Senza madre ohimè !
Io sarotti e madre e padre,
Io sarò tua pastorella ;
Non tremar, diletta agnella,
Io ci penso a te.

23

[WHEN FISHES SET UMBRELLAS
UP]

AMICO pesce, piover vorrà ;
Prendi l’ ombrello se vuoi star
secco.

Ed ecco !

Domani senza fallo si vedrà
Lucertolon zerbino
Ripararsi dal sol coll’ ombrellino.

24

[A RING UPON HER FINGER]

SPOSA velata,
Inanellata,
Mite e sommessa :
Sposo rapito,
Insuperbito,
Accanto ad essa.

Amici, amori,
Cantando a coro
Davanti a loro
Spargete fiori.

25

[THE HORSES OF THE SEA]

CAVALLI marittimi
Urtansi in guerra,
E meglio ci servono
Quelli di terra.
Questi pacifici
Corrono o stanno ;
Quei rotolandosi
Spumando vanno.

26

[O SAILOR, COME ASHORE]

‘O MARINARO, che mi apporti tu?’
‘Coralli rossi e bianchi tratti in su
Dal mar profondo.
Piante non son nè si scavar da mina:
Minime creature in salsa brina
Fecerne mondo.’

27

[THE ROSE WITH SUCH A BONNY
BLUSH]

ARROSSISCE la rosa—e perchè mai?
A cagione del sol: ma, sol, che fai?
E tu, rosa, che t’ hai
Che ti fai rosea sì se bene stai?

28

[THE ROSE THAT BLUSHES ROSY
RED]

LA rosa china il volto rosseggiato,
E bene fa:
Il giglio innalza il viso immacolato,
E ben gli stà.

29

[OH FAIR TO SEE]

O CILIEGIA in fiorita,
La bianco-rivestita,
Bella sei tu.
O ciliegia infruttata,
La verde-inghirlandata,
La rosso-incoronata,
Bella sei tu.

30

[GOOD-BYE IN FEAR, GOOD-BYE
IN SORROW]

‘IN tema e in pena addio,
Addio ma in van, tu sai;
Per sempre addio, cor mio.’
‘E poi più mai.’
‘Oggi e domani addio,
Nel secolo de’ guai
A tutto tempo addio.’
‘E poi più mai.’

31

[BABY LIES SO FAST ASLEEP]

‘D’ UN sonno profundissimo
Dorme la suora mia:
Gli angeli bianchi aligeri
Verranno a trarla via?’
‘In sonno profundissimo
Calma e contenta giace:
Un fiore in man lasciamole,
Un bacio in fronte—e pace.’

32

[LULLABY OH LULLABY]

NINNA-NANNA, ninna-nanna,
Giace e dorme l’ agnellina.
Ninna-nanna, ninna-nanna,
Monna Luna s’ incammina.

Ninna-nanna, ninna-nanna,
 Tace e dorme l' uccellino.
 Ninna-nanna, ninna-nanna,
 Dormi, dormi, o figliolino.
 Ninna-nanna, ninna-nanna.

33

[LIE A-BED]

CAPO che chinasi,
 Occhi che chiudonsi—
 A letto, a letto,
 Sonnacchiosetto !
 Dormi, carino,
 Fino al mattino,—
 Dormi, carino.

Circa State 1878.

SOGNANDO

Ne' sogni ti veggo,
 Amante ed amico ;
 Ai piedi ti seggo,
 Ti tengo tuttor.
 Nè chiedi nè chieggo,
 Nè dici nè dico,
 L' amore ab antico
 Che scaldaci il cor.

Ah voce se avessi
 Me stessa a scoprire—
 Ah esprimer sapessi
 L' angoscia e l' amor !
 Ah almen se potessi
 A lungo dormire,
 Nè pianger nè dire,
 Mirandoti ognor !

Circa 1890.

NOTES BY W. M. ROSSETTI

DEDICATORY SONNET, p. lxxiii. — This sonnet formed the inscription or dedication of the volume published in 1881, *A Pageant and other Poems*. Christina Rossetti's books were, with few exceptions, dedicated to her mother; therefore the present inscription can very properly be removed from the position which it would occupy in order of date, and may form the dedication to the entire body of her poems.

The Longer Poems, p. 1. — Christina Rossetti never wrote a poem which could rightly be called long. I have thought it desirable to begin the collection with those few compositions which have some moderate degree of length, not excluding devotional poems. I transgress, in this section, the order of date, for the purpose of putting *Goblin Market* foremost. It has always held a certain primacy amid Christina's poems, and the strict order of date would have brought to the front a poem whose merit by no means qualifies it for such a position — *Repining*.

Goblin Market, p. 1. — The original title of this poem was *A Peep at the Goblins* — *To M. F. R.* — i.e. Maria Francesca Rossetti. I have more than once heard Christina say that she did not mean anything profound by this fairy tale — it is not a moral apologue consistently carried out in detail. Still the incidents are such as to be at any rate suggestive, and different minds may be likely to read different messages into them. I find at times that people do not see the central

point of the story, such as the authoress intended it: and she has expressed it too, but perhaps not with due emphasis. The foundation of the narrative is this: That the goblins tempt women to eat their luscious but uncanny fruits; that a first taste produces a rabid craving for a second taste; but that the second taste is never accorded, and, in default of it, the woman pines away and dies. Then comes the central point: Laura having tasted the fruits once, and being at death's door through inability to get a second taste, her sister Lizzie determines to save her at all hazards; so she goes to the goblins, refuses to eat their fruits, and beguiles them into forcing the fruits upon her with so much insistency that her face is all smeared and steeped with the juices; she gets Laura to kiss and suck these juices off her face, and Laura, having thus obtained the otherwise impossible second taste, rapidly recovers. — This poem was skilfully translated into Italian by our cousin, Teodorico Pietrocola-Rossetti, under the title of *Il Mercato de' Folletti*, and was published in Florence (Pellas) in 1867. A cantata was made of the English words towards 1872 by Mr. Emanuel Aguilar.

Maids heard the Goblins cry, p. 1. — Various designations are given to the goblins; they are 'goblin men, little men, merchant men, fruit-merchant men.' They certainly had tails, for one merchant was 'whisk-tailed,' and they went 'lashing their tails' when baffled. Then there is the passage, 'One like a wom-

bat prowled obtuse and furry,' etc. The authoress does not appear to represent her goblins as having the actual configuration of brute animals; it was Dante Rossetti who did that in his illustration to the poem (he allows human hands, however). I possess a copy of the *Goblin Market* volume, 1862, with marginal water-colour sketches by Christina—extending up to the poem *Spring* on p. 51 of that volume, but not farther. She draws several of the goblins,—all very slim agile figures in a close-fitting garb of blue; their faces, hands, and feet are sometimes human, sometimes brute-like, but of a scarcely definable type. The only exception is the 'parrot-voiced' goblin who cried 'Pretty goblin.' He is a true parrot (such as Christina could draw one). There are thirty-five such illustrations to *Goblin Market*—the simplest, as of fruit-branches, being the prettiest. When the special edition of *Goblin Market*, with designs by Mr. Laurence Housman, came out in 1893, Christina, although aware that the drawings possess superior artistic merit (a point, however, as to which she was no judge), did not exactly take to them as carrying out her own notion of her own goblins.

For there is no friend like a sister, etc., p. 8.—These lines are clearly connected with the original inscription of the poem, 'To M. F. R.' Christina, I have no doubt, had some particular occurrence in her mind, but what it was I know not. The two poems which immediately precede *Goblin Market* in date show a more than normal amount of melancholy and self-reproach; they are *L. E. L.* (p. 344) and *Ash Wednesday* (p. 217).

Repining, p. 9.—This poem was published in *The Germ*, 1850. It is, of all the poems by Christina Rossetti which appeared in that short-lived magazine, the only one which she did not afterwards reprint. No doubt it is far from being excellent; yet it cannot be called bad. In her MS. it is named *An Argument*, and is very considerably longer than in

The Germ, or hence in the present volume: the curtailment was a highly judicious act. The reader will readily perceive that this poem is to some extent modelled upon Parnell's *Hermit*. The moral, however, is different. Parnell aims to show that the dispensations of Providence, though often mysterious, are just. Christina's thesis might be summarized thus: Solitude is dreary, yet the life of man among his fellows may easily be drearier; therefore let not the solitary rebel.

Three Nuns, p. 12.—The second section of this poem was the first written, standing then as a separate composition. The united poem was inserted into the prose tale *Maude*, with the observation: 'Pray read the mottoes; put together, they form a most exquisite little song which the nuns sing in Italy.' *Maude* was written towards 1850—perhaps earlier. It was published in 1897, but the poem of *Three Nuns* was excluded from it on copyright grounds. The meaning of the mottoes runs thus: This heart sighs, and I know not wherefore. It may be sighing for love, but to me it says not so. Answer me, my heart, wherefore sighest thou? It answers: I want God—I sigh for Jesus.

The Lowest Room, p. 16.—The original title of this poem was *A Fight over the Body of Homer*—perhaps the better title of the two; it contains, in MS., various stanzas which were omitted in publication. This is the poem on which Dante Gabriel Rossetti, in a published letter to his sister, dated 1875, made the following remarks:—'A real taint, to some extent, of modern vicious style, derived from that same source [Mrs. Browning]—what might be called a falsetto muscularity—always seemed to me much too prominent in the long piece called *The Lowest Room*. This I think is now included for the first time, and I am sorry for it. . . . Everything in which this tone appears is utterly foreign to your primary impulses. . . . If I were you, I would rigidly keep guard on this

matter if you write in the future; and ultimately exclude from your writings everything (or almost everything) so tainted.' Christina, on receiving this letter, did not acquiesce in its purport, but later on seemed a little more inclined to do so. However, she always retained *The Lowest Room* in succeeding editions. To me it hardly appears that my brother's view can be pronounced correct. The real gist of *The Lowest Room*—i.e. the final acceptance, by the supposed speaker, of a subordinate and bedimmed position—is clearly the very reverse of 'falsetto muscularity'; if anything of that kind shows in the earlier part of the poem, it shows only to be waved aside.

From House to Home, p. 20.—I have always regarded this poem as one of my sister's most manifest masterpieces; though it is true that the opening of it would perhaps not have taken its present form had it not been for the precedent of Tennyson's *Palace of Art*. In this respect resemblances are obvious; but divergencies also are of the very essence of the poem. When a question arose as to publishing it (in the *Goblin Market* volume) my brother called attention to the point, penciling on the MS. note-book, 'This is so good it cannot be omitted; but could not something be done to make it less like *Palace of Art*?' Christina, however, did nothing at all in that direction; she substituted the present title for the original one, *Sorrow not as those who have no hope*. The essence of the poem is the severance of a human heart from the joys and the loves of earth, to centre in the joys and the loves of heaven; that it is in part a personal utterance is a fact too plain to need exposition. The three poems which in date immediately precede *From House to Home* are *The Love of Christ which passeth Knowledge*, *A Shadow of Dorothea*, and *By the Sea* (or rather a more personal and melancholy lyric poem from which *By the Sea* is extracted); next after *From House to Home* comes *New Year's*

Eve. If the reader cares to turn to these several poems, he will see in all of them evidence of a spirit sorely wrung, and clinging for dear life to a hope not of this world. As elucidating this phase of feeling, so prominent in many of Christina Rossetti's poems, I may refer to the *Memoir*, p. lii.

The Prince's Progress, p. 26.—The original nucleus of this poem is the dirge-song at its close—'Too late for love, too late for joy,' etc. This was written in 1861, and entitled *The Prince who arrived too late*. When Christina Rossetti was looking up, in 1865, the material for a fresh poetical volume, it was, I believe, my brother who suggested to her to turn the dirge into a narrative poem of some length. She adopted the suggestion—almost the only instance in which she wrote anything so as to meet directly the views of another person.

A Royal Princess, p. 35.—This poem was first printed in 1863, in a small volume named *Poems: an Offering to Lancashire*, which was got up 'for the relief of distress in the cotton-districts,' i.e. the 'Cotton Famine,' consequent upon the civil war in the United States. The volume contained contributions by other writers as well—George MacDonald, Allingham, Mary Howitt, Isa Craig, Lord Houghton, Locker-Lampson, Dante Rossetti, etc. That first printed form of the poem contains some variants from the present form, which is the same as in the *Prince's Progress* volume. It is rather singular that Christina should have written in October 1861, before any suggestion of the Cotton Famine began, a poem which, when she was soon afterwards asked to contribute something for this object, came in so markedly appropriate.

Maiden-Song, p. 38.—This simple light-hearted poem—a kind of cross between the tone of a fairy-tale and that of a nursery-song, each of them sweetened

into poetry—was deservedly something of a favourite with its authoress.

The Iniquity of the Fathers upon the Children, p. 41.—This title formed at first, in the volume of 1866, the motto of the poem, its title then being *Under the Rose*. The change was made in the re-edition of 1875. In a copy of that re-edition I find a note by Christina as follows: 'This was all fancy, but Mrs. [W. Bell] Scott afterwards told me of a somewhat similar fact.' It seems to me that the 'fancy' may have been partly guided by a leading incident in Dickens's *Bleak House*.

The Months: A Pageant, p. 48.—This *Pageant*, which was written at Seaford, has been acted more than once, at any rate in girls' schools. I remember an instance reported from America not long before the authoress's death. Indeed this was partly in her view in writing the poem.

OCTOBER.

Here comes my youngest sister looking dim
And grim,
With dismal ways.—p. 54.

Christina had a considerable spice of fun in her composition, as well as profound seriousness and rooted melancholy. She wrote these lines regarding November with a side-glance at herself—or at any rate quoted them sometimes as a telling self-description.

A Ballad of Boding, p. 55.—I give to this the date 'before 1882,' on the ground that it was published in the *Pageant* volume, 1881. The MSS. of Christina Rossetti's poems, up to 11 June 1866, are, with few exceptions, extant and dated in notebooks; but after that time, although several MSS. exist, few precise dates are traceable. Christina published the *Prince's Progress* volume in 1866—the *Pageant* volume in 1881. The reader will understand that, in saying 'before 1882'—in this instance, and the like in several others—I do not

imply that the composition was written shortly before 1882, for it may date at any time between June 1866 and 1881. I am seldom, in such cases, able to approximate the true date nearer than this.

Monna Innominata, p. 58.—To any one to whom it was granted to be behind the scenes of Christina Rossetti's life—and to how few was this granted—it is not merely probable but certain that this 'sonnet of sonnets' was a personal utterance—an intensely personal one. The introductory prose-note, about 'many a lady sharing her lover's poetic aptitude,' etc., is a blind—not an untruthful blind, for it alleges nothing that is not reasonable, and on the surface correct, but still a blind interposed to draw off attention from the writer in her proper person.

Sonnet 1, p. 58.—Some English readers may like to see the mottoes of this sonnet and of its successors anglicized. I give them so here; the reader will observe for himself that in every instance the first sentence comes from Dante, and the second from Petrarca: 1. The day that they have said adieu to their sweet friends. Love, with how great a stress dost thou vanquish me to-day!—2. It was already the hour which turns back the desire. I recur to the time when I first saw thee.—3. Oh shades, empty save in semblance! An imaginary guide conducts her.—4. A small spark fosters a great flame. Every other thing, every thought, goes off, and love alone remains there with you.—5. Love, who exempts no loved one from loving. Love led me into such joyous hope.—6. Now canst thou comprehend the quantity of the love which glows in me towards thee. I do not choose that Love should release me from such a tie.—7. Here always Spring and every fruit. Conversing with me, and I with him.—8. As if he were to say to God, 'I care for nought else.' I hope to find pity, and not only pardon.—9. O dignified and pure conscience!

Spirit more lit with burning virtues.—10. With better course and with better star. Life flees, and stays not an hour.—11. Come after me, and leave folk to talk. Relating the casualties of our life.—12. Love, who speaks within my mind. Love comes in the beautiful face of this lady.—13. And we will direct our eyes to the Primal Love. But I find a burden to which my arms suffice not.—14. And His will is our peace. Only with these thoughts, with different locks.

An Old-World Thicket, p. 64.—This poem bears a certain analogy to the earlier one, *From House to Home*. I think it sustains the comparison, though pitched in a lower key. The essence of *From House to Home* is unison with the Church Triumphant, through self-abnegation. The essence of the *Old-World Thicket* might be expressed in a quotation from St. Paul: 'The creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.' The poem does not, as I read it, relate to the Church Triumphant, nor in a very express form to the Church Militant; rather, at the close of the poem, to the scheme of redemption, and the flock of Christ.

All Thy works praise Thee, O Lord, p. 68.—In 1897 Prebendary Glendinning Nash, the Incumbent of Christ Church, Woburn Square (the church frequented by Christina Rossetti in all her closing years), adapted a portion of this poem for a harvest festival under the name *A Processional of Creation*. It was set to music by Mr. Frank T. Lowden, and sung at the evening service in that church, 21 October.

Later Life, p. 73.—The authoress terms this 'a double sonnet of sonnets'; and I apprehend that the majority of it must have been written with a definite intention that its various constituent parts should form one whole. Probably, when

the general framework was getting into shape, two or three outlying sonnets were pressed into the service.

Sonnet 17, 'Past certain cliffs,' etc., p. 78.—I consider that the beach of Hastings and St. Leonard's is here intended.

Sonnet 18, p. 79.—This sonnet is altered—i.e. its octave is entirely different—from the sonnet named *Cor Mio* (p. 389).

Sonnet 21, p. 79.—The reference to foreign travel in this sonnet and its successor relates to the year 1865, when Christina, along with our mother, accompanied me to North Italy through Switzerland.

Sonnet 22, 'Struck harmonies,' etc., p. 80.—I think this is spoken figuratively—not as implying that my sister actually wrote or even composed 'a song' concerning the Alps. If she composed any such, it seems to have remained unpublished and untraced.

Sonnet 25, p. 81.—This sonnet, being written before 1882, cannot relate in part to the death of Dante Gabriel or of our mother. So far as it relates to any particular death, that of our sister Maria may have been mainly in the writer's thought—assuming (that is) that the sonnet was written after November 1876.

Sonnet 27, p. 81.—This forecast of death came singularly true; for, if one had been writing a condensed account of Christina Rossetti's last days and hours in December 1894, one might have described them very nearly in these terms. Perhaps, however, few among her Christian readers will suppose that she 'may have missed the goal at last.' The reference to a 'saint rejoicing on her bed' may glance at Maria.

Juvenilia, p. 82.—When I was editing, soon after my sister's death, those compositions of hers which were published as *New Poems* in 1896, I put

at the end of the volume all the *Juvenilia*, i.e. all the poems written before she completed, on 5 December 1847, her seventeenth year. My object naturally was to set a certain stamp of inferiority on the *Juvenilia*, lest readers of that volume should suppose that these compositions were accepted or presented by me as standing on a footing of equality with work of a less immature age. In the present complete edition of the Poems I do not see that any such precaution can be necessary; and I therefore place the *Juvenilia* immediately after *The Longer Poems*, in the position which belongs to them according to order of date.

To my Mother, on the Anniversary of her Birth, p. 82.—These are the first verses that Christina ever produced; written as they were on 27 April 1842, she was then aged eleven years and a third. I presume that we were all a little surprised at her 'coming out' in this line, but have no express recollection of details. Our grandfather, Gaetano Polidori, who kept a private printing-press, printed the lines at once on a card; he afterwards, 1847, included them in the small volume named *Verses*. I need not say that the lines are regarded by me as in no sense approaching towards excellence. In the first of Christina's note-books these two quatrains appear, and the dates for later productions go on to 3 December 1845; and my mother has written on the flyleaf the following 'N.B.' which may be worth quoting:—'These verses are truly and literally by my little daughter, who scrupulously rejected all assistance in her rhyming efforts, under the impression that in that case they would not be her own.' At some date—it may have been towards 1850—Christina took it into her head to make some little coloured illustrations to that printed volume of *Verses*; they are slight and amateurish—one might indeed say childish. There is a certain degree of fancy in them, however; and Dante Gabriel always considered that our sister, had she chosen to study and

take pains, might have done something as an artist. To the present small poem the emblem is two sprigs of heartsease. As I proceed I shall mention other devices, whenever they seem to present any point of interest. I may also mention here that there is another copy of the *Verses* illustrated with pencil designs by Dante Gabriel: they must have been made very soon after the booklet was printed—certainly before the autumn of 1848. The frontispiece is a very truthful profile likeness of Christina. Then follow designs to *The Ruined Cross* (which poem I have not thought good enough for reprinting here), *Tasso and Leonora*, *Lady Isabella*, and *The Dream*. This copy, neatly bound, was presented by our grandfather to the authoress: on the fly-leaf he wrote some verses of his own to her, which had accompanied a bunch of red and white roses. The profile likeness of Christina, mentioned above, is the one whence was taken a tracing which has been reproduced in the published volume of *Letters by Dante G. Rossetti to William Allingham*.

The Chinaman, p. 82.—This trifle had not hitherto been printed among Christina's compositions, only in the book published in 1895—*Dante Gabriel Rossetti, his Family-letters, with a Memoir* by myself. The account which I there give of the verses is substantially as follows:—The year 1842 was the year of the Anglo-Chinese Opium War. I was told by one of my schoolmasters to make an original composition on the subject of China, and I think the composition had to be in verse. What I wrote I have totally forgotten. Christina saw me at work, and chose to enter the poetic lists. She produced the present lines.—So far as I can trace, this was quite, or very nearly, the first thing that Christina wrote in verse, after the two stanzas *To my Mother*. About three months before her death I happened to be talking to her as to this and other old family reminiscences, and I found her to

be under the impression that, by the time when she wrote *The Chinaman*, she had already done various other small things. Still, looking to known and probable dates, I cannot make it out to be so. Luckily the question is not of high importance to the literary world.

Charity, p. 84.—Christina's note to these lines in MS. is as follows: 'The foregoing verses are imitated from that beautiful little poem *Virtue* by George Herbert.'

Love Ephemeral, p. 84.—Device: the crescent moon, with a lunar (more like a solar) rainbow.

Burial Anthem, p. 84.—I have an impression that this was written in relation to the death of some young clergyman esteemed in our household; there was not any death in our immediate family about that date. Device: a sprig of blue and pink forget-me-not.

Lines to my Grandfather, p. 85.—This trifling performance is included among the *Juvenilia*, not because it is good, but because it has a personal flavour. My sister was at the time, I think, staying with some friends in the country not far from London. Two rhyme-words in the final stanza are obviously rhymes, not sense.

The End of Time, p. 87.—Device: a rose crossing a scythe; within the angle of the scythe, an hour-glass.

Couplet, p. 88.—This was an oral improvise. As I found occasion to introduce it into my Memoir of Dante Rossetti (1895), I may as well repeat the trifle here. Of course, the first line of the *Couplet* comes from a well-known old-fashioned song.

Amore e Dovere, p. 88.—There is a letter from Christina to Dante Gabriel, 1865, saying that the second stanza should be cut out. She assigns no reason, and I think best to leave it in: the reader can give it any consideration

he likes. In stanza 3 no rhyme is supplied to 'lagni'—seemingly an oversight.

Mother and Child, p. 88.—Mr. William Sharp published in *The Atlantic Monthly* for June 1895 a very sympathetic and interesting article, *Some Reminiscences of Christina Rossetti*. Here he says that on one occasion Dante Gabriel 'pointed out that Blake might have written the four verses called *Mother and Child*.' It would seem truer to say that Blake might have written a lyric of higher quality, embodying much the same conception. Device: some flowers of undefined genus, with sun-rays behind them.

Mary Magdalene, p. 89.—As the date shows, these simple and somewhat touching verses were written on 8 February 1846. On 30 March Christina wrote a different poem, *Divine and Human Pleading*—of a slightly 'preachy' kind, dissuading from the invocation of saints. Then, in the printed volume *Verses*, the two compositions, under the second title, were joined together. I am certain that the *Mary Magdalene* is better singly; and I so give it, omitting the *Divine and Human Pleading*.

On the Death of a Cat, p. 89.—This cat belonged to our aunt, Eliza Harriet Polidori. Device: a cat, in a rather sentimental attitude of languor, extending its right arm over a kitten. The cat is sandy and white, the kitten tabby.

To Elizabeth Read, with some Postage-stamps for a Collection, p. 90.—Miss Read was a young lady under the tuition of our sister Maria: she is now Mrs. Bull, widow of a leading physician in Hereford. Christina had a most cordial liking for her. The design to this trifle is a human personation of one of the stamps, bowing in the character of a 'humble servant,' and wearing the 'livery of red and black,' of a sort of mediæval cut.

Love Defended, p. 90.—Device: a

blind man (stanza 3) groping, with trees in the background.

The Martyr, p. 91.—Device: the soul of the martyr received into heaven by an angel. Between the angel's wings are a series of red and white curves, symbolizing (I suppose) the nine heavens, as in Dante.

The Dying Man to his Betrothed, p. 92.—Device: a rosebush intertwined by a snake.

Gone for Ever, p. 95.—This comes properly among the *Juvenilia*, according to the order of date. It was written before Christina was sixteen years of age, and was included in the privately printed *Verses*. Device: a moss-rose, not fully blown. When she was preparing the *Prince's Progress* volume, 1866, she considered the present lyric good enough to be published—and I suppose no one has questioned her discretion in this respect; and published it was, without any change of diction at all. I have felt some doubt whether, under these circumstances, I ought to include it among the *Juvenilia* or not. On the whole I have thought it best to do so; it gains rather than loses in interest by this observance of the order of date.

The Time of Waiting, p. 95.—Device: a damsel on a steep green slope, stretching her arms up longingly; from the sky a black-hooded woman, or spectre, addresses her with an action of admonition. This seems to be apposite chiefly to triplet 2.

Tasso and Leonora, p. 96.—Device: the shooting star in a female form.

Love, p. 97.—In February 1847 Christina wrote a weak affair, four stanzas, which she entitled *Praise of Love*. This is the final stanza (much superior to the others), and got at last published in *Time Flies*. It was not reproduced in the *Verses* of 1893.

Resurrection Eve, p. 98.—Device: a white grave-cross, two palm-shrubs inter-

lacing above it; in the sky, crescent moon and star.

The Dead City, p. 99.—This was originally called *The City of Statues*. In point of length it ranks among *The Longer Poems*, but my arrangement retains it among the *Juvenilia*. The reader will, no doubt, perceive that it bears a certain relation to a story in *The Arabian Nights*, which was one of the comparatively few books that my sister, from a very early age, read frequently and with delight. Beyond this, taken along with what is obviously indicated in the poem itself, I cannot say whether any particular intention was present to her mind.

Came and stole them from their master, p. 99.—This has been remarked upon as a palpable make-rhyme, on the assumption that (if either of the two) the word ought to be 'mistress.' But there is no clear reason why the 'I' of the narrative should be a woman; a phrase a little further on strongly suggests the contrary—'Before me the birds had never Seen a man.'

Spring Quiet, p. 103.—As in the case of *Gone for Ever*, this is a very early poem, included in the *Prince's Progress* volume.

The Dream, p. 104.—I am not sure whether the first short quatrain here printed is an integral portion of the poem, or rather a quotation from some other writer; I fancy the latter.

Eleanor, p. 105.—This may be a portrait from the life—I know not now of whom.

Isidora, p. 106.—Maturin's romance *Melmoth the Wanderer* is, I suppose, still known to several readers; it was republished some few years ago. Yet it may be as well to say, in explanation of the present poem, that Melmoth is a personage who has made a compact with the Devil, thereby securing an enormous length of life (say at least a century and

a half), and the power of flitting at will from land to land. At the end of the term, Melmoth's soul is to be forfeited, unless he can meanwhile induce some one else to take the compact off his hands. Melmoth makes numerous efforts in this direction, but all abortive. One of his intended victims is a beautiful girl named Immalee, a child of Nature in an Indian island—a second Miranda. She becomes deeply enamoured of Melmoth, but resists his tamperings with her soul. She is finally identified as the daughter of a Spanish Grandee, and is then baptized as Isidora. At one point of the story she espouses Melmoth, and bears him a child. Christina's poem is her deathbed scene. The last line is truly a fine stroke of pathos and of effect; but it is not Christina's—it comes *verbatim* out of Maturin.

Zara, p. 107.—See the note on the poem *Look on this picture, and on This* (p. 323). In the novel of *Women*, Zara is the rival (she finally turns out to be the mother) of Eva; she is a shining leader of society. In the same year, 1847, when she wrote *Zara*, my sister wrote a separate composition, *Eva*. Its merit is but middling, and I do not reproduce it here. The device to *Zara* is a foxglove plant, with insects sucking its poison-honey.

Immalee, p. 108.—See the note (p. 466) on *Isidora*.

Heart's Chill between, p. 109.—This poem, called at first *The Last Hope*, was published under its present title in *The Athenæum*, 14 October 1848, being the first poem by Christina that got published. It was reprinted in Mr. Mackenzie Bell's book, 1898. When I was compiling, in 1895, the volume named *New Poems*, I omitted this composition, thinking that, as it comes, in point of date, near the close of the *Juvenilia*, it ought to have been better than it is, and was hardly good enough for re-publication. The revival of the poem by Mr. Bell alters the conditions somewhat, so I now put it in.

Lady Isabella, p. 109.—This was Lady Isabella Howard, a daughter of the Earl of Wicklow; she was a pupil of my aunt, Charlotte Polidori. My sister entertained an ardent admiration for the loveliness of character and person which marked this young lady, who died of a decline at the age of eighteen or thereabouts.

Night and Death, p. 109.—It may reasonably be assumed that this lyric also has some reference to the death of Lady Isabella Howard.

Death's Chill between, p. 110.—See the preceding note upon *Heart's Chill between*. *Death's Chill between* was published in *The Athenæum*, 21 October 1848. It was originally named *Anne of Warwick*, and was intended to represent (in a rather 'young-ladyish' form) the dolorous emotions and flitting frenzy of Anne, when widowed of her youthful husband, the Prince of Wales, slain after the battle of Tewkesbury. If I remember right, this poem was offered to *The Athenæum* at the same time as *Heart's Chill between*; and my brother then substituted these titles for the original ones, so as to establish between the two a certain relation of contrast in similarity. At the present distance of date, it might perhaps have served better to preserve the first titles. My observations as to the exclusion of *Heart's Chill between* from the *New Poems* apply to this composition as well.

The Lotus-Eaters, p. 111.—Of course the sentiment here, as well as the title, comes to some considerable extent out of Tennyson.

One Certainty, p. 119.—This appears to have been written during a period of illness. In the MS. notebook, the next preceding poem is the sonnet *Rest*, in Christina's own handwriting (15 May); then the present sonnet and *Looking Forward* (8 June) are in our mother's handwriting. Again, on 31 August, *A Testimony* is in Maria's. Towards this period, and even before, Christina's state

of health gave rise to serious anxiety. See the *Memoir*, p. 1.

Songs for Strangers and Pilgrims, p. 120.—This series of poems continues inclusively up to the verses *Looking back along life's trodden way*, p. 145. It consists of lyrics out of three volumes—those which are named respectively *Called to be Saints* (1881), *Time Flies* (1885), and *The Face of the Deep* (1892). *Called to be Saints*, though only published in 1881, was written (as shown by a letter from Christina dated in December 1880) 'several years' before that date—possibly 1877: therefore, in quoting poems from that volume, I give the date 'circa 1877.' The poems from all three volumes were reprinted in the *Verses* (1893) published by the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge; and then, for the first time, they were ordered under one general heading, as given above. In this instance, and in others ensuing later on, I, as a matter of course, follow the arrangement made by my sister, although it entails a certain interference with the order of date. The *Songs for Strangers and Pilgrims* form the eighth and last (not the first) section of those which make up the volume *Verses*; I place it here first because one of its compositions dates as early as 2 March 1850. In the present complete edition, this point, rather than the sequence of sections in the previously issued volume, seems to govern the question. The eight sections (which will be found reproduced one by one as we proceed) take the following order in the *Verses*: (1) *Out of the Deep have I called unto Thee, O Lord*; (2) *Christ our All in All*; (3) *Some Feasts and Fasts*; (4) *Gifts and Graces*; (5) *The World—Self-destruction*; (6) *Divers Worlds—Time and Eternity*; (7) *New Jerusalem and its Citizens*; (8) *Songs for Strangers and Pilgrims*.

Her Seed: It shall bruise thy head, p. 120. This poem comes from *The Face of the Deep*, and would, in ordinary course, stand dated by me 'before 1893.' But a note made in that book by Christina

shows that it was written before the date of our mother's death (which was in April 1886), so I name a date to correspond. The note in question runs: 'This one dearest mamma heard and liked.'

Judge nothing before the time, p. 121.—From *Time Flies*. The lines form the entry for 16 January, and appear to be intended to be read as a sequel to the entry for the 15th, which is on the text, 'In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth,' followed by a reflection that 'Adam's initial work of production (so far as we are told) was sin, death, hell, for himself and his posterity.'

Man's life is but a working day, p. 121.—This stanza is modified from the conclusion of the little poem *In Patience* (p. 238). In its present form it belongs to *Time Flies*.

Marvel of marvels, etc., p. 122.—It will be observed that this poem—like the *Passing Away*, at p. 191—is made up of one sole rhyme-sound; I think it holds nearly as high a rank among the authoress's verses. Its principal reference is, no doubt, to the deaths of her sister and mother.

Afterward he repented, and went, p. 123.—In *Time Flies* this lyric, which has an energetic personal tone, stands, without any title, as the entry for 11 May. I do not remember that any salient event of Christina's life was associated with that particular day, but may mention that 12 May was the birthday of Dante Gabriel, and the prose entry for this latter day might, without much straining, be supposed to have a certain reference to him; he had died three years before *Time Flies* was published. It may be that the two entries were, in some degree, 'read together' in their author's mind, as having a relation to him.

Are they not all Ministering Spirits? p. 124.—The precise bearing of this poem becomes clearer when we observe its context in *The Face of the Deep*. It comes in after the text—'And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the

seven vials full of the last seven plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the Bride, the Lamb's wife.' The point specially raised in the prose comment, which leads up to the poem, is that this gracious and joyful message is delivered by one of those same angels who poured forth the plagues.

Our life is long, etc., p. 124.—This piece appeared in *Time Flies*, and I date it accordingly 'Before 1886.' But, on reference to p. 185, it will be seen that this is a modification of a much earlier poem, *How Long?*—dated 14 April 1856. As there are some fundamental differences between the two pieces, I print both here.

Lord, what have I to offer? etc., p. 124.—The reference to 'a heart-breaking loss' seems to indicate that these lines refer to some particular event in my sister's life. They appear in *Time Flies*, under the date 24 April; I do not identify any such event with that day, but can easily conceive a relation in the poem to some different day.

Can I know it?—*Nay*, p. 125.—This composition (from *The Face of the Deep*) forms a sort of meditation on the words addressed by Christ to the Church of Philadelphia. Amid those words comes the expression 'Thou hast a little strength.' On this the authoress comments (in prose)—'Why not much strength? God knoweth.' And soon afterwards the poem ensues.

What is it Jesus saith unto the soul? p. 127.—This sonnet, in its first form, was written on 2 March 1850. As printed, the octave is not much altered, but the sextett is entirely recast. The title used to be *Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted*. The first form of the sonnet appears printed in the prose tale *Maude*, published in 1897.

'*The sinner's own fault*,' etc., p. 128.—Stanza 1 is a modification of stanza 7 in *Margery* (p. 360).

Who would wish back the saints, etc., p. 129.—These three stanzas, now altered in metre and diction, formed at first a portion of the poem *Better so* (see p. 351).

Where shall I find a white rose blowing? p. 131.—This was first printed for a bazaar, held in June 1884, for the Boys' Home at Barnet, founded by Colonel Gillum. It was then named *Roses and Roses*.

Now they desire a Better Country, p. 132.—In a copy of *Time Flies*, Christina marked this as 'my first roundel.'

These all wait upon Thee, p. 132.—This stanza comes (with some verbal modifications) out of the poem *To what purpose is this Waste?* (see p. 305).

Doeth well . . . doeth better, p. 132.—I consider that this poem relates to Maria Francesca Rossetti, who had died in 1876. Christina often called her playfully 'Moon' or 'Moony.'

Vanity of Vanities, p. 133.—These stanzas, altered in diction, come out of the poem *Yet a Little While* (p. 342).

Scarce tolerable Life, which all life long, p. 133.—I date this sonnet 'circa 1884,' because I find the rough draft of it written upon a scrap of paper which bears the date 'Easter Eve 1884.'

Alleluia! or Alas! my heart is crying, p. 135.—This little poem comes from *The Face of the Deep*. It depends immediately upon those texts of *The Apocalypse* which purport that 'the kings of the earth' were 'saying, Alas, alas, that great city Babylon!' on the same occasion when 'much people in heaven' were 'saying, Alleluia! Salvation and glory and honour and power unto the Lord our God.' From this consideration the authoress proceeds to reflect upon the alternative in her own spiritual state.

The Flowers appear on the Earth, p. 135.—Originally these two stanzas formed a part of the poem *I have a Message unto Thee*, p. 316. Their diction has been slightly altered, but only slightly.

Bury Hope out of sight, etc., p. 137.—In *Time Flies* this forms the entry for 5 December, which was the authoress's birthday. I assume that it was purposely inserted in relation to that anniversary,

and probably to the death of Charles Bagot Cayley on the same day.

A Churchyard Song of Patient Hope, p. 138.—Christina, in placing this poem in the *Verses* next after the last-named, seems to have intended that the two should be read together. The original framework of the *Churchyard Song* was quite different: it formed in *The Face of the Deep* part of the reflections upon the Apocalyptic text, 'And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes,' etc.

One woe is past, etc., p. 138.—Naturally this poem belongs, in *The Face of the Deep*, to the same words in chap. ix. of *The Apocalypse*. As arranged in the *Verses*, I think Christina intended it to be read in association with the preceding two compositions.

Thus I sat mourning, etc., p. 139.—I have seen these two lines objected to as being somewhat ludicrously grotesque. Christina Rossetti did not think any part of the Bible ludicrous, and she found in the prophet Micah, 'I will make a wailing like the dragons, and mourning as the owls.'

Behold, I stand at the Door and Knock, p. 147.—These verses were published in some magazine. I fancy it may have been one named *Aikin's Year*, with which Mary Howitt was connected. If so, I think the publication must be not later than 1854; and these would be (apart from the *Versi*, etc., see p. 446) the first verses by Christina which got into print after the cessation of *The Germ* in 1850.

St. Elizabeth of Hungary, p. 150.—I take it that this lyric received its immediate inspiration from the picture of like subject painted by James Collinson.

A Harvest, p. 153.—In the MS. notebook the title is *Annie*, and the poem extends to twenty stanzas. It then took the form of an address to 'Annie' by a husband or lover; possibly the poignantly pathetic lines of Edgar Poe, *For Annie*, were partly in my sister's mind. At some later date she numbered five out of the twenty stanzas, evidently contemplat-

ing to retain those five alone. I follow her lead, and supply a new title. The poem as it originally stood is, however, by no means a bad one.

Sleep at Sea, p. 154.—Was at first named *Something like Truth*.

Some Feasts and Fasts, p. 156.—This general heading continues up to the poem *Sunday before Advent* (p. 179).

Embertide, p. 163.—This poem (from *The Face of the Deep*) takes occasion from the passage of *The Apocalypse*—'And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not.' The prose comment on the passage contains the following: 'What we know with certainty of this beatified elder is not his name, but his Christ-likeness. As once his Master on earth, so now he in heaven saith, Weep not. The one and only aspect high or low need desire to be known by is Christ-likeness. Thus the saints are stamped, thereby they become recognizable.' And then follows the present poem.

Mid-Lent, p. 164.—This sonnet (from *Time Flies*) is obviously based in some degree upon the other sonnet, *Who have a Form of Godliness*, at p. 156, which was not published by the authoress.

Monday in Holy Week, p. 165.—This short piece was originally entitled *For under a Crucifix*. Written in 1853, it was first published in 1885, in *Time Flies*.

Good Friday Morning, p. 166.—This is the only piece which the authoress added to the volume *Verses*, consisting otherwise of reprints from previous volumes.

Ascension Day, p. 170.—To the last two lines in this poem (ending, 'Is that His cloud?') Christina wrote, in a copy of *Time Flies*, the note: 'An idea picked up, I cannot remember where.'

There remaineth therefore a Rest, p. 180.—In the notebook this composition numbers twelve stanzas; two of them, under the title *The Bourne*, were eventually published ('Underneath the growing grass,' etc.). The remaining ten were

not unworthy to pair with those two, but I think it best to use only five of them.

Paradise, p. 180.—The first title of this poem was *Easter Even*. In a printed copy of her *Poems*, wherein Christina made a few jottings, she has here noted 'Not a real dream.'

Ye have forgotten the Exhortation, p. 181.—Our father having died on 26 April 1854, it is not unnatural to think that this poem, dated 10 May 1854, bears some direct relation to that loss. There had been two other deaths in the family, April and December 1853—those of our maternal grandparents; to her grandfather especially Christina was most warmly attached. The title, *Ye have forgotten the Exhortation*, standing by itself, does not seem to be specially apposite to this poem. It becomes so when read with its context (*Hebrews* xii. 5, 6): 'And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.'

The World, p. 182.—This is one of Christina Rossetti's most energetic utterances, and a highly characteristic one. She had in fact a great horror of 'the world,' in the sense which that term bears in the New Testament; its power to blur all the great traits of character, to deaden all lofty aims, to clog all the impulses of the soul aspiring to unseen Truth. I recollect her once saying to me with marked emphasis, when my children were past their very earliest years, 'I hope they are not *worldly*.' It is an interesting observation of the great poet Leopardi, in one of his prose writings, that this sense of 'the world' appears to have been entirely unknown to antiquity, and to have formed one of the most potent messages of Jesus Christ.

In Christina's sonnet the opposite aspects of the world by day and by night may call for a little reflection. The primary sense (of course subsidiary to some spiritual meaning) appears to be that the world—like other devils, spectres, and hobgoblins—appears *in propria persona* in the night-hours only; it is then that she is recognised for the fiend she actually is.

Zion Said, p. 183.—As in a previous instance, the context makes this heading more significant,—*Isaiah* xlix. 13, 14: 'The Lord hath remembered his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted. But Zion said, The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me.' This quotation appears in a condensed form in the poem *Christian and Jew* (p. 203).

Hymn after Gabriele Rossetti, p. 183.—In our father's volume of religious poems, *L'Arpa Evangelica* (1852), there is a composition named *Nell Atto della Comunione*, in three parts. The third begins with the words—'T' amo, e fra dolci affanni,' and is the one which Christina here translates in two separate versions. The date which I give is conjectural; I assume the translation to have been made not long after our father's death. The copy of the *Arpa Evangelica* into which these verses were inserted is profusely illustrated with pencil-designs by Christina.

I will lift up mine Eyes unto the Hills, p. 184.—In MS. the title of this poem (viewed with predilection by its authoress) was *Now they desire a better Country*. It was printed in the *Lyra Eucharistica*, 1864, as *Conference between Christ, the Saints, and the Soul* (this must, I think, have been a title proposed by the editor of the selection); in 1875, under its present title, it was included in Christina's collected *Poems*.

A Christmas Carol for my Godchildren, p. 187.—Christina, from time to time, acted as godmother to various children—

mostly, I think, children of poor people in the neighbourhood of Christ Church, Albany Street, Regent's Park. It may be worth noting that this carol was written not at Christmas time, but early in October; and in many instances a reference to dates would show that poems about festivals of the Church, or about seasons of the year, were written at dates by no means corresponding.

After this the Judgment, p. 188.—This composition in *terza rima*, written immediately after Christina Rossetti had completed her twenty-sixth year, was at first named *In Advent*, and it began with eight *terzine*, evidently prompted by a sense of the waning of early youth, and of melancholy at present and prospective conditions of life. These opening *terzine* had not any distinctly devotional character, and Christina, when she published her poem, excluded them. They are little or not at all less good than the rest of the composition, so I give them separately (p. 328), supplying a title—*Downcast*, for *In Advent* would no longer have any adequate application to them.

Old and New Year Ditties, p. 190.—It will be observed that these three lyrics were written in three several years. They used to be called—(1856) *The End of the Year*; (1858) *New Year's Eve*; (1860) *The Knell of the Year*. I have always regarded this last as the very summit and mountain-top of Christina's work. I will not say, nor indeed think, that nothing besides of hers is equal to it; but I venture to hold that, while she never wrote anything to transcend it in its own line, neither did any one else. The poem depends for its effect on nought save its feeling, sense, and sound; for the verses avoid regularity of the ordinary kind, and there is but one single rhyme throughout. The note is essentially one of triumph, though of triumph through the very grievousness of experience past and present. In framing the section of her *Devotional Poems*, 1875 and 1890,

Christina used to put these *Ditties* last, followed only by *Amen* and *The Lowest Place*. In reading them together, it is natural for her brother to reflect whether they indicate any special occurrences in the years to which they relate. I cannot remember that they do—cannot, for instance, say that in 1856 she was in any express sense 'stripped of favourite things she had'; however, the year 1860 (besides being the year of Dante Gabriel's marriage) was that in which Christina, a few days before she wrote *The Knell*, attained the age of thirty, and her thoughts as to the transit of years may have been more than ordinarily solemn. Her reference to her having 'won neither laurel nor bay' has also its interest. The bay began sprouting soon afterwards, with the appearance, in *Macmillan's Magazine* for February 1861, of the poem *Up-hill*, which at once commanded a considerable share of public attention. It is quite possible that Christina—the most modest of poets, but by no means wanting in the self-consciousness of poetic faculty—thought in 1860 that the bay had been kept waiting quite long enough; and it is a fact that, between 24 July 1860, the date of *The Lambs of Westmoreland*, and 23 March 1861, the date of *Easter Even*, she wrote no verse whatever except this *Knell of the Year*.

The Heart knoweth its own Bitterness, p. 192.—Few things written by Christina contain more of her innermost self than this. In her volume *Verses* (published by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge) she took the first and last stanzas of this vehement utterance, and, altering the metre observably, and the diction not a little, she published them with the title, *Whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive* (see p. 194). I think it only right to give the poem in full, as well as the extracted portion of it.

Divers Worlds—Time and Eternity, p. 193.—This series of poems continues up to the verses *For All*. For some

general remarks on the series see the note (p. 468) upon *Songs for Strangers and Pilgrims*.

Earth has clear call of daily bells, p. 193.—These two stanzas (first printed in *Time Flies*) are modified from two out of the eight which compose the poem *Yet a Little While* (p. 342). That poem has no connection with a stanza which bears the same title (p. 193).

Whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive, p. 194.—See the note (p. 472) to *The Heart knoweth its own Bitterness*.

'Was Thy Wrath against the Sea?' p. 195.—These lines from *The Face of the Deep* relate to the text, 'There was no more sea,' after the creation of 'a new heaven and a new earth.' This text dwelt much in Christina's mind, and prompted various allusions in her writings.

And there was no more Sea, p. 195.—See the preceding note. Notwithstanding the title which the present piece bears in the volume *Verses*, it comes in *The Face of the Deep* in connection with a very different passage of *The Apocalypse*—'And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing and honour and glory and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.'

Roses on a brier, p. 196.—Another variation on the same theme. It comes from *Time Flies*, being the entry (without any associated prose) for 9 June.

Then whose shall those things be? p. 197.—These lines, published in *Time Flies*, are extracted (with a slight verbal change) from *A Burden* (see p. 205).

Parting after parting, p. 200.—This little poem is made up from two separate stanzas first published in *Time Flies*. Stanza 1 forms the entry for 30 May; stanza 2 belongs to 10 August, and in *Time Flies* it relates to the parting and

reunion of two martyrs—Laurence and Pope Sixtus. Stanza 1 (ten lines) is condensed from fourteen lines, named *Good-bye*, which were written on 15 June 1858, and (as marked in the MS. notebook) 'in the train from Newcastle.' This implies that Christina was then 'parting' from her friends the Bell Scotts of Newcastle, and, her visit being then terminated, was returning home to London. It will thus be seen that the intensity of feeling here expressed really originated in a very slight occurrence—the occurrence itself merely served the poet's turn as a suggestion of highly serious matters. Stanza 2 used to be the conclusion of the lyric *Meeting*, written on 11 June 1864 (see p. 366).

Advent, p. 202.—In the annotated copy of her *Poems* Christina wrote against this one: 'Liked, I believe, at East Grinstead'—which one may well credit of the 'Wise Virgins' of that establishment. The greater part was set to music for Christina's funeral service at Christ Church, Woburn Square, by the organist, Mr. Lowden. I heard the music sung, and can testify to its beautiful and touching effect.

Only Believe, p. 205.—There were originally some other lines concluding this poem. They appear under the title *What good shall my Life do me?* (p. 215).

New Jerusalem and its Citizens, p. 206.—This heading (from the *Verses*, 1893) extends on to the poem just aforementioned, *What good shall my Life do me?*

Who is this that cometh up not alone? p. 207.—In a copy of *Time Flies* I find the following note by my sister: 'These lines were suggested by a sermon I heard from the Rev. Marshall Turner in Christ Church, Woburn Square.'

Antipas, p. 208.—This poem (which comes from *The Face of the Deep*) is founded upon those words which, in *The Apocalypse*, Christ speaks in addressing the church of Pergamos: 'Thou hast not denied my faith, even in those days

wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you.' And in the prose commentary Christina said: 'Men know him not now, how he lived or how he died. God alone knows him. Enough for blessed Antipas.'

As cold waters to a thirsty soul, etc., p. 209.—These three stanzas are partly identical with the five stanzas which compose *A Shadow of Dorothea* (p. 216). The present three, having been published by my sister, cannot here be omitted. I think it would be a pity to omit the other five, and they therefore figure in our pages as well.

'*Our Mothers*, etc.,' p. 214.—Christina evidently associates together, in the *New Jerusalem* series, this piece and the following one, as having a bearing personal to herself. They both come from *The Face of the Deep*, but from very different contexts there.

Is it well with the Child? p. 214.—This small lyric appeared in *Time Flies*, as being related to the martyrdom of St. Faith (supposed to be 'a noble maiden of Aquitain' in the third century). Her feast is 6 October. The verses formed originally a part of a longer composition named *Young Death*—date, 3 November 1865—and obviously relating to some very youthful person known to the authoress. Who this may have been I cannot now say. The portion of *Young Death* which was not included in the *Verses* has thus a certain personal interest. It is marked by a union of devoutness with quaint *naïveté* characteristic of Christina's verse in some moods; and, as I should not wish the lines to be totally lost, I give them separately under their proper date and title (see p. 244).

What good shall my life do me? p. 215.—See the note (p. 473) on *Only Believe*.

A Shadow of Dorothea, p. 216.—I do not find in the legend of St. Dorothea any incident corresponding closely to this. I understand that, in the poem,

the speaker is a human soul, not as yet confirmed in saintliness, appealing to the flower-bearing Angel of the legend, or rather indeed to the Saviour Christ. See the note above on the poem *As Cold Waters*, etc.

For Henrietta Polydore, p. 217.—Christina's title only says 'H. P.,' but the lines are certainly intended for Henrietta Polydore, our cousin (see note to p. 421). She was born in England and brought up a Roman Catholic. By a curious train of circumstances she was at one time, while still a child, in Salt Lake City with the Mormons. Her father recovered her thence, at a time when a military expedition was sent by the Federal Government to control affairs in the Territory of Utah; and the present lines were presumably written by Christina when she heard that her youthful cousin was about to re-embark for England.

Ash Wednesday, p. 217.—These verses—bearing no title beyond *Jesus, do I love Thee?*—were printed in the *Lyra Eucharistica*, 1864. *Ash Wednesday* is the authoress's own title in her MS. notebook; I retain it, as the lines were evidently written towards the date of that fast. Preceding the last quatrain, the MS. gives six verses of ecstatic religious appeal which, as they were not printed, I with some hesitation omit.

A Christmas Carol, p. 217.—This was in the *Lyra Messianica*, 1865, named simply *Before the paling of the stars*. I retain my sister's own title.

Christ our All in All, p. 218.—This general heading continues up to the poem *The Chiefest among Ten Thousand* (p. 232). See the note (p. 468) to *Songs for Strangers and Pilgrims*.

An exceeding bitter cry, p. 218.—The phrase 'too late for rising from the dead' may ask a word of explanation. The poem comes from *The Face of the Deep*, and relates to Christ's address to the Church of Sardis, in which occur the

words, 'Thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.'

Thy Friend and thy Father's Friend forget not, p. 226.—This poem is based upon one which was written as far back as 26 August 1859, entitled *Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another*. The printed version is the shorter of the two, and is modified throughout, the closing lines being quite different.

'And now why tarriest thou?' p. 228.—This was set to music (like *Advent*—see the note on p. 473) by Mr. Frank Lowden, and was sung at Christina's funeral service.

Within the Veil, p. 234.—From the *Lyra Messianica*. These verses would seem to refer to the recent death of some religious and cherished young friend; I cannot say who it was. In MS. the title of the verses is *One Day*.

For a Mercy Received, p. 235.—I am unable to say what the 'mercy' was.

The Lowest Place, p. 237.—As an expression of her permanent attitude of mind in the region of faith and hope, Christina evidently laid some stress on this little poem. She made it the concluding piece in the *Prince's Progress* volume, and also in the combined form of that volume with the *Goblin Market* one. Hence I thought the second stanza of this poem the most appropriate thing that I could get inscribed upon her tombstone in 1895. In the sequence of compositions in her MS. notebook there is nothing to show any exceptional degree of devout absorption towards this date. *The Lowest Place* bears the same date as *The Ghost's Petition*, and comes immediately after the sunny playful-minded *Maiden Song*.

Come unto Me, p. 237.—This is the title given to the sonnet when first published in the *Lyra Eucharistica*; in MS. it stands as *Faint yet Pursuing*. It belongs to a knot of pieces showing some dejection and self-reproach, from 20 Janu-

ary to March 1864. The next following lyrics, *Patience* and *Easter*, have a less disconsolate tone. The other pieces in question are *Beauty is vain*, *What would I give? Who shall deliver me?*

By the Waters of Babylon, p. 239.—*In Captivity* was the first name of this forcible piece of *terza rima*.

Despised and Rejected, p. 241.—The point of view in this poem is rather remarkable. To some extent it pairs with the earlier composition (p. 147), *Behold I stand at the Door and Knock*. That, however, is obviously addressed to the prosperous and callous—the Dives who will not take count of Lazarus. Here we have a different situation. The supposed speaker is clearly a person who has been rather hardly treated by the world, and who determines that henceforth he will be left alone. The message addressed to him is: 'Whatever you exclude, through condonable disgust with the world and its ways, don't exclude Christ, nor yet the poor and suffering, who are Christ's representatives here.' Thus the poem bears some faint analogy (yet not the least resemblance) to *The Poet's Vow* of Mrs. Browning.

Birds of Paradise, p. 242.—This was printed in *Lyra Messianica*, under the title *Paradise in a Symbol*. In that volume the substituted title is appropriate, because another poem by Christina is there, named *Paradise in a Dream* ('Once in a dream I saw the flowers,' etc., see p. 180). For the present poem her own title in MS. was *Birds of Paradise*, which I prefer to retain here. In the MS. the last line of stanza one stands 'Windy-winged they came.' I reproduce the printed phrase, yet am sorry to lose the written one.

I know you not, p. 243.—From *Lyra Messianica*. Date conjectural.

Young Death, p. 244.—This is only a portion of the poem, as first written. See the note (p. 474) on *Is it well with the Child?* The gaps left by the extrac-

tion of the latter lyric are indicated here by asterisks.

A Christmas Carol, p. 246. This was first published in *Scribner's Monthly*, January 1872. It was republished, 1875, in the volume of united poems, being then made to open the series of Devotional Poems.

Wrestling, p. 247.—This is the introductory poem to Christina Rossetti's volume of prayers named *Annus Domini*, published by Messrs. James Parker and Co. in 1874. It had not hitherto been reproduced in any volume of her poems. In *Annus Domini* the composition stands untitled. I supply a title of my own. Stanza 7 was not printed in *Annus Domini*. Christina (as notified in Mr. Mackenzie Bell's book) wrote it afterwards, and I find it in the copy which she inscribed to our mother for her birthday, 27 April 1874.

The Master is come and calleth for Thee, p. 248.—In the annotated copy of Christina's poems I find a note as follows: 'Dr. Littledale wanted a hymn—for a "Profession," I think; so I wrote this. But I think it was not adopted.'

Saints and Angels, p. 249.—On this poem Christina made a rather quaint note, personal to myself: 'William aptly remarked that this contains nothing about angels.'

A Rose Plant in Jericho, p. 250.—This sweet little poem has (it would seem) less of personal intensity of emotion than a reader might surmise from its terms. It stands annotated by Christina thus: 'Written once when Mr. Shipley wanted something' (the Rev. Orby Shipley, who edited more than one volume of devotional verse). The precise bearing of the title is not clear to me.

Patience of Hope, p. 250.—This comes from *The Children's Hymn-book*, edited by Mrs. Carey Brock, Bishop How, and others, and published by Messrs. Rivington. The date of publication appears to

be 1881, and I therefore date this poem 'circa 1880.' The words are set to be sung to the tune 'Grasmere' by Mr. Cameron W. H. Brock. In *The Children's Hymn-book* the composition was named *Thou art the same, and Thy Years shall not fail*: when it was reprinted in the volume of 1891, the present title was substituted.

I will Arise, p. 251.—To this and some other poems I give the date 'before 1882,' on the ground that they were published in the *Pageant* volume, 1881.

'Behold, a Shaking,' p. 255.—The first of these two sonnets is an evident recasting of the third sonnet in the series (p. 384), named *By Way of Remembrance*. I much prefer that third sonnet. It was not published by Christina herself, and I give both forms of the composition.

Why? p. 260.—It will be seen that this sonnet bears some relation to another sonnet, *If only* (p. 244), and to the lyric, *When my heart is vexed I will complain* (p. 248).

If thou sayest, etc., p. 261.—The whole context may as well be quoted here: 'If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain; if thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not He that pondereth the heart consider it? and He that keepeth thy soul, doth not He know it?'

A Sick Child's Meditation, p. 263.—Comes from a little Church serial named *New and Old*.

Out of the Deep have I called unto Thee, O Lord, p. 264.—This section of the *Verses* continues on to the sonnet, *Light of Light*. See the note (p. 468) to *Songs for Strangers and Pilgrims*.

Gifts and Graces, p. 270.—Continues on to the verses which begin, 'Lord, grant us grace to rest upon Thy word.'

Christmas Carols, p. 278.—It is reasonable to suppose that these three carols were written in different years.

I am not aware of the correct dates. The first carol was published (in *The Century-Guild Hobby-horse*) in 1887, and so I give a general date, 'circa 1887.'

A Hope Carol, p. 280.—I give here the date 'before 1889,' on the ground that the verses were first published in *The Century-Guild Hobby-horse*, 1888.

Yea I have a Goodly Heritage, p. 280.—As to the date, I only know that this was published in October 1890 (in *Atalanta*).

Mary Magdalene and the other Mary: a Song for all Maries, p. 281.—Perhaps the authoress meant something special by the sub-title. She may have been thinking of her mother's second name Mary, and her sister's name Maria.

A Death of a First-born, p. 282.—Relates to the death of the Duke of Clarence and Avondale.

Faint yet Pursuing, p. 282.—These sonnets were published in *Literary Opinion*, April 1892. Date conjectural.

The World—Self-destruction, p. 283.—This series of poems, lasting up to the lines which begin, 'Toll, bell, toll,' come from *The Face of the Deep*, reprinted in the *Verses*, 1893.

All Things, p. 285.—This short piece belongs also to *The Face of the Deep*. I have given a title, for clearness' sake. My sister did not reproduce the piece in the *Verses* of 1893. I cannot discern any reason for the omission, unless it be that she thought the lines too brief to hold their place in that volume.

Heaven Overarches, p. 286.—When I was looking through my sister's effects, shortly after her death in 1894, I found these verses rather roughly written in a little memorandum-book. Their date must, I think, be as late as 1893. Except *Good Friday Morning* (p. 166) and *Sleeping at Last* (p. 417), they appear to be about the last lines produced by my sister.

A Portrait, p. 286.—The reader will

observe that the second of these two sonnets belongs, in point of date, to the *Juvenilia*. It was written for the death of Lady Isabella Howard. See the note (p. 467) upon *Lady Isabella*. The sonnet which here stands first was meant for Saint Elizabeth of Hungary, and was so entitled; Christina had before then read with interest Kingsley's drama, *The Saint's Tragedy*. The name *A Portrait* is intended, I assume, to reidentify the brace of sonnets with Lady Isabella Howard. I question, however, whether some of the stronger expressions in the first sonnet are wholly applicable to this young lady.

Three Stages, p. 288.—This triple poem was written, as the reader will perceive, at three very different dates, ranging between 1848 and 1854. The first section was originally named *Lines in Memory of Schiller's Der Pilgrim*; but, when published by my sister, it received the altered title, *A Pause of Thought*. She did not see fit to publish sections 2 and 3; not, I am convinced, that she thought them below the mark, but because of their intimately personal character. I published them in the volume of *New Poems*, keeping them separate, and naming No. 3 *Restive*. As I mentioned at that time, I think the proper ultimate treatment for the three sections is to keep them united, as Christina herself united them in MS.; and this I now effect.

Lady Montrevor, p. 290.—This sonnet applies to a personage in Maturin's novel, *The Wild Irish Boy*. Christina, as well as her brothers, was in early youth very fond of Maturin's novels, and more than one of her poems relate to these. Lady Montrevor is possibly now almost forgotten. She is a brilliant woman of the world who fascinates 'the Wild Irish Boy,' and leads both him and herself into grave dilemmas.

Song ('When I am dead, my dearest'), p. 290.—This celebrated lyric (which has perhaps been oftener quoted, and

certainly oftener set to music, than anything else by Christina Rossetti) was, except for one composition, her only production in December 1848. The other, so far from being of any the like calibre, is so indifferent that it has never been published: it bears the rather odd title, *What Sappho would have said, had her leap cured instead of killing her*—and its date is 7 December 1848. The next poem after *When I am dead* is the *Symbols*, 7 January 1849 (p. 116). The reader may perhaps not object to see here a few particulars about musical settings of Christina's works. *Goblin Market* and *Songs in a Cornfield* are referred to in other notes; also some composed by Mr. Lowden. I myself possess musical settings as follows, but no doubt there are several others. *When I am Dead*, by Mary Carmichael and ten other composers; five from *Singsong*, by Mary Carmichael, and four by Schlesinger; *Up-hill*, four settings; *A Birthday* and *Bird Raptures*, two each; *Hope is like a Harebell*; *First Spring Day*; *If*; *The Skylark*; *Dreamland*; *A Summer Wish*; *Echo*, by Virginia Gabriel; *Yea or Nay*; *I bore with Thee*; *Advent*; *Two Doves*.

An End, p. 292.—This is one of the poems published in *The Germ*, 1850. The others were—*Dreamland*, *A Pause of Thought*, *Song* (Oh roses for the flush of youth), *A Testimony*, *Repining*, and *Sweet Death*.

Dream land, p. 292.—Christina made three coloured designs to this lyric. In the first we see the 'She' of the poem journeying to her bourn. She is a rather sepulchral-looking, white-clad figure, holding a cross; the 'single star' and the 'water-springs' are apparent, also a steep slope of purplish hill which she is leaving behind. The second design gives the nightingale singing on a thorny rose-bough. In the third, 'She' is rising and ascending winged; her pinions are golden, of butterfly-form.

Looking Forward, p. 293.—The tone of this lyric suggests that it was written

in expectation of seemingly imminent death; in the MS. notebook it stands in my mother's handwriting (quite contrary to wont), and so does another poem, dated in the same month, *One Certainty* (p. 119).

Queen Rose, p. 295.—Christina sang often—possibly too often—the praises of the rose; she regarded it not merely in its own beauty, but as the symbol of love, whether construed as deep human affection or as union with the Divine. The lily stood with her (as with so many another) for faith.

Endurance, p. 297.—This sonnet does not appear in Christina's MS. note-books. It was inserted into the prose tale *Maude* (published in 1897) as being a morbid effusion of 'Maude.' As the MS. of that tale was done in 1850, I presume that the sonnet may have been written towards that date. It is not very good, but could scarcely (I think) be omitted here. The same remarks (save as to demerit) apply to the next ensuing lyric, *Withering*. In both cases the titles are mine.

Twilight Calm, p. 297.—This poem looks like a direct transcript from nature, as if the authoress had observed the particular features of the scene one by one, and had noted them down at the moment. And yet it cannot have been so; unless indeed one supposes that it was mainly written at one season, and only concluded at another. Its recorded date, 7 February, is inconsistent with several of the details described—bees, leafy wood, lilies and roses shutting, etc.

Is and Was, p. 300.—The last line of this poem, 'Doing all from self-respect,' may be worth a moment's comment. Much about the time when the poem was written, a lady told my sister that the latter seemed to 'do all from self-respect,' not from fellow-feeling with others, or from kindly consideration for them. Christina mentioned the remark, with an admission that it hit a blot in

her character, in which a certain amount of reserve and distance, not remote from *hauteur*, was certainly at that date perceptible. She laid the hint to heart, and, I think, never forgot it. A like phrase appears in a poem of much later date, July 1865, *Enrica* (see p. 377).

Annie, p. 301.—Christina, the most scrupulous of women and of writers, put to this lyric a note—‘query Borrow.’ She meant that there may, or possibly may not, be here some unconscious reminiscences from other poems.

Books in the Running Brooks, p. 303.—This, in MS., stands entitled *After a Picture in the Portland Gallery*. What this picture may have been I cannot now say; not one by Dante Rossetti, who did not exhibit in that gallery after 1850.

To what purpose is this Waste? p. 305.—The reader will observe, on p. 132, the composition, *These all wait upon Thee*, extracted with modified diction from the present poem.

Next of Kin, p. 307.—This might appear to be a personal address to some very youthful relative; if so, it can only be intended for the ‘Lalla’ named on p. 421, for Christina had no other relative younger than herself. But perhaps no personal reference is really intended.

For Rosaline’s Album, p. 307.—Rosaline was Miss Orme, who, not long after the date of these verses, married Professor David Masson, now King’s Historiographer for Scotland. These sepulchral verses are perhaps not quite the staple for a very youthful (and I might add charming) lady’s album.

Dead before Death, p. 313.—I am unable to say what gave rise to this very intense and denunciatory outpouring. It was written three days before the authoress completed her twenty-fourth year; and possibly it may be regarded as an address to herself—not indeed as she was, or even supposed herself to be, but as she might become if ‘Amor Mundi’

were to supersede the aspiration after divine grace.

The First Spring Day, p. 314.—In a copy of her *Poems*, 1875, Christina made the following note: ‘I was walking in the Outer Circle, Regent’s Park, when the impulse or thought came.’

My Dream, p. 315.—If anything were needed to show the exceptional turn of mind of Christina Rossetti—the odd freakishness which flecked the extreme and almost excessive seriousness of her thought—the present poem might serve for the purpose. It looks like the narration of a true dream; and nothing seems as if it could account for so eccentric a train of notions, except that she in fact dreamed them. And yet she did not; for, in a copy of her collected edition of 1875, I find that she has marked the piece ‘not a real dream.’ As it was not a real dream, and she chose nevertheless to give it verbal form, one seeks for a meaning in it, and I for one cannot find any that bears development. She certainly liked the poem, and in this I and others quite agreed with her; I possess a little bit of paper, containing three illustrations of her own to *The Dream*, and bearing the date 16 March ’55. There is (1) the dreamer slumbering under a tree, from which the monarch crocodile dangles; (2) the crocodile sleeping with ‘unstrung claw,’ as the ‘winged vessel’ approaches; and (3) the crocodile as he reared up in front of the vessel, and ‘wrung his hands.’ I may add that, for some reason as untraceable perhaps as that which guided Christina in the writing of *The Dream*, Dante Gabriel bestowed the name of ‘the prudent crocodile’ (from this poem) upon Mr. William Morris, and the nickname found favour with some other members of our circle. Perhaps it will one day turn up in correspondence, and will remain unfathomable to persons who do not read this note.

I have a Message unto Thee, p. 316.—After the sixth stanza of this poem came

two other stanzas here omitted. My sister used them, with slight verbal alterations, as a separate composition, *The Flowers appear on the Earth* (see p. 135).

To the End, p. 319.—The last quatrain of this poem seems to present a certain reminiscence (yet far from being a plagiarism) from Dante Rossetti's early achievement, *The Blessed Damozel*.

Shut Out, p. 320.—In MS. this piece bears the too significant title, *What happened to Me*.

Acme, p. 323.—In point of sentiment, not at all in the form of treatment, this sonnet bears some analogy to one by Dante Rossetti, *A Superscription*. The latter was written in January 1869, long after Christina's sonnet: the resemblance must be fortuitous.

Look on this Picture and on This, p. 323.—In my sister's MS. this poem is a rather long one, forty-six triplets; I have reduced it to twenty-three—omitting those passages which appear to me to be either in themselves inferior, or adapted rather for spinning out the theme than intensifying it. Longer or shorter, the poem is perhaps hardly up to the writer's mark; but there is a degree of peculiarity about it which disinclines me to drop it out. Were it not for the name 'Eva,' I should be embarrassed to guess what could have directed my sister's pen to so singular a subject and treatment; but that name satisfies me that she was here recurring to a favourite romancist of her girlhood, Maturin (see note to p. 107). In Maturin's novel entitled *Women* there is a personage Eva, and a situation which must certainly have prompted the present poem.

Downcast, p. 328.—This is in strictness a fragment, and its full rhyme-system, as *terza rima*, is necessarily uncompleted. See the note (p. 472) to *After this the Judgment*.

A Triad, p. 329.—This very fine sonnet was published in the volume of

1862, *Goblin Market and other Poems*, but was omitted in subsequent issues. I presume that my sister, with overstrained scrupulosity, considered its moral tone to be somewhat open to exception. In such a view I by no means agree, and I therefore reproduce it here, as I did in the volume of *New Poems*, 1896.

Love from the North, p. 329.—Was originally named *In the Days of the Sea-Kings*, which is perhaps the better title of the two.

In an Artist's Studio, p. 330.—The reference is apparently to our brother's studio, and to his constantly-repeated heads of the lady whom he afterwards married, Miss Siddal.

In the Round Tower at Jhansi, p. 332.—On hearing this tragic episode of the Indian Mutiny, my sister composed the poem, which I always rate among her masterpieces; and she published it in the *Goblin Market* volume, 1862. In a subsequent reissue she added the following note: 'I retain this little poem, not as historically accurate, but as written and published before I heard the supposed facts of its first verse contradicted.' In that copy of the *Goblin Market* volume in which Christina drew a few coloured designs, she has put a head- and tail-piece to the Jhansi poem. The former is a flag displayed—pink field, with a device of two caressing doves. The latter is the same flag, drooping from its broken staff, and seen on the reverse side, besmeared with blood.

A Nightmare (Fragment), p. 333.—In my sister's note-book this composition begins on p. 25, and ends on p. 27; the intermediate leaf has been torn out. Mere scrap as it is, I should be sorry to lose it quite.

For One Sake, p. 333.—The precise bearing of this sonnet may admit of some uncertainty. It would seem that some woman known to the authoress (I cannot at all say who it was) had died, and was regarded by her as now a saint in heaven,

the 'imperishable bride' of Christ. Or possibly the 'imperishable bride' is the Christian Church in the abstract. The phrase as to 'wars and rumours of your wars' seems to be anything but germane to such a theme. The war of the Indian Mutiny was then raging; and it may be that the writer intended to express the opinion—which she certainly entertained—that any such turmoil is a very little thing, in comparison with the question whether the human soul is to be saved or lost to all eternity.

Memory, p. 334.—It will be observed that this remarkable utterance is made up of two separate poems, written at a rather wide interval of dates. No. 1 was originally named *A Blank*; No. 2, *A Memory*.

A Birthday, p. 335.—I have more than once been asked whether I could account for the outburst of exuberant joy evidenced in this celebrated lyric; I am unable to do so. Its correct sequence is shown in these pages, between Part I. of *Memory* and *An Apple Gathering*—poems neither of which is at all in the like strain. It is, of course, possible to infer that the *Birthday* is a mere piece of poetical composition, not testifying to any corresponding emotion of its author at the time; but I am hardly prepared to think that.—In some illustrated comic paper a parody of the lyric was printed; it amused Christina, who pasted it into a copy of her *Poems*, 1875. It may perhaps amuse other people, and I give it here:—

AN UNEXPECTED PLEASURE

(After Christina G. Rossetti)

My heart is like one asked to dine
Whose evening dress is up the spout;
My heart is like a man would be
Whose raging tooth is half pulled out.
My heart is like a howling swell
Who boggles on his upper C;
My heart is madder than all these—
My wife's mamma has come to tea.

Raise me a bump upon my crown,
Bang it till green in purple dies;
Feed me on bombs and fulminates,
And turncocks of a medium size.

R

Work me a suit in crimson apes
And sky-blue beetles on the spree;
Because the mother of my wife
Has come—and means to stay with me.

Winter, My Secret, p. 336.—This was at first named *Nonsense*; but, if there is method in some madness, there may be nous in some nonsense.

My Friend, p. 336.—One can scarcely doubt that this refers to the death of some person known to and beloved by the writer. Perhaps at one time I knew who it was, but do not now.

Maude Clare, p. 337.—This poem was originally much longer than it is now. It numbered forty-three stanzas or thereabouts (there is a gap in the MS. note-book just before its close). It was first published in *Once a Week*, 5 November 1859, with a design by Millais—far from being among his best. There were then sixteen stanzas—now only twelve. I am not sure that the omission of the opening stanza was an advantage; here it is:—

The fields were white with lily-buds,
White gleamed the lilled beck;
Each mated pigeon plumed the pomp
Of his metallic neck.

Autumn, p. 337.—Was at first entitled *Ding Dong Bell*.

Up-hill, p. 339.—This was, I believe, the first poem by Christina which excited marked attention; it was published in *Macmillan's Magazine* for February 1861, and was at once accepted by poetical readers as an observable thing. The like had, in its small degree, been the case with the verses printed in *The Germ*; but then *The Germ* had next to no circulation.

At Home, p. 339.—Was originally called *After the Picnic*, and was written (as a pencil-note by the authoress says) 'after a Newcastle picnic,' which must no doubt have been held in company with the Bell Scotts. This, however, was a trivial title, to which my brother raised some objection. He considered

this to be about the best of all Christina's poems, and was not (I conceive) far wrong, though there are others equally good. It will be perceived that 29 June 1858 was a red-letter day in Christina's poetic calendar. She produced on that day (or else she simply completed) *Uphill*, *At Home*, and the ensuing *To-day and To-morrow*, which, though left unpublished during her lifetime, appears to me only a trifle less masterly than the other two. She illustrated *At Home* with two coloured designs, which, inefficiently done as they are, carry a certain imaginative suggestion with them. No. 1 shows the blanched form of the ghost in a sky lit with cresset flames. On one side the sky is bright blue, the flames golden; on the other side, dark twilight grey, and the flames red. No. 2 is the globe of the earth, rudely lined for latitude and longitude. The equator divides it into a green northern and a grey-purple southern hemisphere. Over the former flare sunbeams in a blue sky; below the latter the firmament is dimly dark, and the pallid moon grey towards extinction.

The Convent Threshold, p. 340.—The authoress seems to have combined in this impassioned poem something of the idea of an Héloïse and Abélard with something of the idea of a Juliet and Romeo. The opening lines, *There's blood between us*, etc., clearly point to a family feud, as of the Capulets and Montagues; but it is difficult to believe that the passage beginning 'A spirit with transfigured face' would have been introduced unless the writer had had in her mind some personage, such as Abélard, of exceptionally subtle and searching intellect. It may be observed moreover that (as with the letters of Héloïse to Abélard) this seems to be intended for a written outpouring, not a spoken one: see the line on p. 342, 'I cannot write the words I said.'

Yet a Little While, p. 342.—Stanzas 3, 4, 7, and 8 are used, with modifica-

tions, in other poems; the first pair in *Vanity of Vanities* (p. 133), and the second pair in the opening lyric (p. 193) of *Divers Worlds, Time and Eternity*. Nevertheless I have thought it undesirable to cut them out of the present poem.

Father and Lover, p. 343.—These two songs—the first spoken by the Father, and the second by the Lover—come from a prose fairy-tale named *Hero*, which was printed in the volume entitled *Commonplace and Other Stories*, 1870—long out of print. I am not sure as to when my sister wrote *Hero*; it was before 1866, and I think some years before.

By the Sea, p. 343.—This lyric of three stanzas was taken out of one of six stanzas, named *A Yawn*. The longer poem has a much more decided personal note in it.

Winter Rain, p. 344.—There is hardly any poem by my sister, other than this, evincing a certain pleasure in the phenomena of winter. She was rather lavish of her coloured illustrations to it, giving no less than four. These are the 'bower of love for birds,' and the 'canopy above nest and egg and mother,' and the 'meadow-grass pied with broad-eyed daisies,' and the lilies on land and water.

L. E. L., p. 344.—This poem was at first entitled *Spring*, and a note was put to the title, '*L. E. L.* by E. B. B.' The note must refer to Mrs. Browning's poem named *L. E. L.'s Last Question*; but it is not entirely clear what relation Christina meant to indicate between that poem and her own *Spring*. Apparently she relied either upon *L. E. L.*'s phrase, which was, 'Do you think of me as I think of you?'—or else upon a phrase occurring in Mrs. Browning's lyric, 'One thirsty for a little love.' It will be clear to most readers that Christina's poem *Spring* relates to herself, and not at all to the poetess *L. E. L.* (Letitia Elizabeth Landon). I suppose that, when the publishing-stage came on, Christina preferred to retire behind a

cloud, and so renamed the poem *L. E. L.*, as if it were intended to express emotions proper to that now perhaps unduly forgotten poetess. The poem, as it stands in my sister's MS. note-book, has lines 1 and 3 of each stanza unrhymed, and she has pencilled a note thus: 'Gabriel fitted the double rhymes as printed, with a brotherly request that I would use them'; and elsewhere she adds, 'greatly improving the piece.' In other respects the printed *L. E. L.* is nearly identical with the MS. *Spring*.

Spring, p. 345.—In that copy of the *Goblin Market* volume to which Christina supplied some coloured designs, this poem (printed on p. 51) is the latest, in order of pagination, to be thus distinguished. Her illustration is rather curious: it applies to the line 'Life nursed in its grave by Death.' We see Death, a white and sufficiently 'bogyfied' personage, holding on her lap a motionless female form, with yellow hair and pink drapery. A markedly leafless tree rises above the group.

Cousin Kate, p. 347.—Like *A Triad* (see the note on p. 480), this poem was published by my sister in a volume, but withdrawn in subsequent issues. The like was the case with the ensuing poem, *Sister Maude*, which seems to show a certain reminiscence from Tennyson's composition, *The Sisters*.

No, thank you, John, p. 349.—In the copy of my sister's combined *Poems* (1875), in which she made a few jottings, I find this rather amusing entry: 'The original John was obnoxious, because he never gave scope for "No, thank you."' I think I understand who John was; he dated, so far as my sister was affected, at a period some years prior to 1860.

The Lambs of Grasmere, p. 350.—In the above-named copy of the *Poems* Christina has written of the lambs, 'Mrs. Ruxton talked about them.' I still remember the occasion well. Mrs. Ruxton (the 'Mary Minto' mentioned in

a published letter of Mrs. Browning) was married to a retired captain in the army, and for a brief while they lived at Grasmere. She was a lady of very dignified character and aspect, whom my sister both liked and respected in no common degree.

Wife to Husband, p. 351.—I am not aware that this poem has any individual application. If any, it might perhaps be to my brother's wife, whose constant and severe ill-health permitted no expectation of her living long. Her death took place in February 1862.

Better So, p. 351.—This poem consisted at first of six stanzas. The 3rd, 4th, and 6th, were extracted by my sister, and, with some modification of diction and metre, were published in *Time Flies*, and in the *Verses* of 1893. The remaining three stanzas seem to me to be of much the same degree of merit; they are complete enough in themselves, so I publish them here. It seems probable that the whole poem was written upon the death of some cherished friend; I do not remember who it was. The date is not consistent with any death in our own family. The next poem relates of course to the decease of the Prince Consort. It might be possible (not, I think, probable) to suppose that Christina wrote the present lines as an appropriate utterance for 'Our Widowed Queen.' The Prince indeed died on 14 (not 13) December, but on the 13th his death was clearly anticipated.

In Progress, p. 352.—The expressions in this sonnet, if used by some one else, might have been not far from apposite to Christina herself. I do not, however, consider that she wrote the verses with any such reference. Clearly the sonnet describes some particular person; I can think of two ladies not wholly unlike this touching portrait—one more especially whom Christina first knew in Newcastle-on-Tyne. But any such guess may be quite wrong.

Seasons, p. 354.—These lines show

a shrinking from winter-time, apparent in several other compositions. Italian blood may partly account for this; yet, after all, there is plenty of beauty in an ordinary winter, English or other, and the sensations of an invalid (troubled up to early middle age with many symptoms which seemed to point towards consumption) may have had more to do with the feeling.

A Ring Posy, p. 354.—Was published in the *Prince's Progress* volume, but omitted by the authoress from later reprints. Possibly she thought the poem to be marked by an unchristian shade of self-complacency.

A Year's Windfalls, p. 355.—A note written by my sister says, 'This was written for the Portfolio Society.' I have not any distinct recollection about this Society; possibly Mrs. Bell Scott had something to do with it.

Twilight Night, p. 359. Part 2 of this compound poem was the earlier written. Part 1 formed at first a chaunt in *Songs in a Cornfield*: see the note below to that poem.

What would I Give! p. 363.—In the sequence of dates there is evidence of a period of spiritual depression and self-reproof. The present poem is followed immediately by *Come unto Me* (which was originally called *Faint yet Pursuing*) (p. 237), and *Who shall Deliver Me* and *In Patience* (p. 238). The last-named is dated 19 March; next comes *Easter*, 9 April. The *Come unto Me*, though in a different metrical form, may almost be regarded as continuous with *What would I Give*.

The Ghost's Petition, p. 364.—Used to be called *A Return*, and had four concluding stanzas following the twenty-five which stand in print. Possibly they are better out; but several readers may have felt a certain abruptness in the present termination. In a copy of Christina's *Poems*, 1875, I find that she has altered line 1 of stanza 5 thus—'Sleep, sister,

and wake again.' This alteration, however, does not appear in print in any later edition; and being uncertain as to the date when it was written, I leave it aside. My own preference is for the original line.

Hoping against Hope, p. 365.—This was published in *The Argosy*, March 1866, under the title *If*. It was afterwards reprinted with the title which I give, sanctioned (I presume) by my sister. Mr. Frederick A. Sandys made a very able design to it, engraved on wood; able, but (to my thinking) not in character with the poem.

A Sketch, p. 368.—These humorous verses (I am perfectly convinced, though their authoress never enlightened me on the subject) relate to a matter which was from the first highly serious to her, and became hardly less than tragic. It is clear to me that the person here bantered was Charles Bagot Cayley, a man eminently unpractical in habit of mind, and abstracted and wool-gathering in demeanour. It is equally clear that, by the date when the verses were written, August 1864, Christina, though the least forward of women, had evinced towards him an amount of graciousness which a man of ordinary alertness would not have overlooked. This *Sketch* might apparently be interpolated, by a reader of *Il Rosseggiar dell' Oriente*, between Nos. 2 and 3 of that series.

Songs in a Cornfield, p. 369.—In this pathetic poem the names of the singers were at first Lettice, Marian, May, and Janet. Afterwards Marian was turned into Rachel, and Janet into Marian. The original Marian (now Rachel) sang the second song; but this was a different lyric—the one which now forms No. 1 in *Twilight Night*. Also there were a dozen concluding lines to the whole poem, left out in printing. *Songs in a Cornfield* was set to music by Sir G. A. Macfarren as a cantata, which was performed more than once. To me the

music appeared truly beautiful; but I believe it did not take much with the public, perhaps because of its extremely melancholy tone at the close. I sometimes fancied that, to avoid this objection, a judicious move would have been to place the swallow-song last in the cantata.

Hear an unked strain, etc., p. 372.—I suppose this provincial word 'unked' (or unkid) is familiar to several readers: it stands for 'grim, uncanny, dismal.' My sister got hold of it thus. Our uncle Henry Polydore told us (possibly in some such remote year as 1840) that the old country-woman with whom he was lodging used to keep a brief diary; and he had noticed that the entry made in it for one night of unusual storm was, 'Oh what an unkid night!' This may have been in Buckinghamshire, or perhaps in Gloucestershire. The small anecdote amused us all in its way, and the phrase became a sort of catchword among us, and, when the occasion offered, Christina enshrined the word in a poem.

Amor Mundi, p. 374.—This justly celebrated poem appeared first in *The Shilling Magazine*, with a fine illustration by Mr. Frederick Sandys. It has also been made the subject of an oil-picture by Mr. Edward Hughes. Mr. Sandys showed a group of two lovers—the man guitar-playing and singing, the woman pleasing herself with a hand-mirror. I do not perceive, however, that such was exactly the authoress's intention. I take it that both her personages are female: one of them a woman, the other the World in feminine shape. The first speaker is the woman, who inquires of the World whither she is going: it is the World who is figured with 'love-locks,' and as 'dear to doat on,' and who is afterwards pronounced 'false and fleetest.' The reader can take or reject this opinion as he likes, for I do not remember ever hearing the point settled by Christina. In her arrangement of her poems when collected, she put *Up-hill*

next after *Amor Mundi*; a significant juxtaposition, done no doubt with intention. That she thought well of the latter may easily be conjectured; none the less I find in one of her editions the following note on the poem: 'Gabriel remarked very truly, a reminiscence of *The Demon Lover*.' This remark would refer more directly to stanza 3.

From Sunset to Star Rise, p. 375.—This very impressive sonnet was at first entitled *Friends*. In the note-book containing the MS. of the sonnet I find a pencil note, 'House of Charity,' written against the title. The House of Charity was, I think, an Institution at Highgate for reclaiming 'fallen' women; and it may perhaps be inferred that Christina wrote this sonnet as if it were an utterance of one of these women, not of herself. Yet one hesitates to think so, for the sonnet has a tone which seems deeply personal. 'Christina' (thus wrote Mrs. William Bell Scott in 1860) 'is now an associate, and wore the dress—which is very simple, elegant even; black with hanging sleeves, a muslin cap with lace edging, quite becoming to her with the veil.'

En Route, p. 377.—Under this heading I find three pieces in MS. which seem to have little connection one with the other. Presumably they were all written while my sister, along with my mother and myself, was making a flying visit to North Italy (through France and Switzerland). She was never there at any other time. The passionate delight in Italy to which *En Route* bears witness suggests that she was almost an alien—or, like her father, an exile—in the North. She never perhaps wrote anything better. I can remember the intense relief and pleasure with which she saw lovable Italian faces and heard musical Italian speech at Bellinzona after the somewhat hard and nipped quality of the German Swiss. I now give only one piece under the name *En Route*. The first piece and the third were used by my sister in her

poem named *An Immurata Sister* (see p. 380).

Enrica, 1865, p. 377.—This poem was first published, under the name of *An English Drawing-room*, in a selection entitled *Picture Posies, Poems chiefly by Living Authors*, 1874, with an illustration by Houghton. I remember perfectly well the lady to whom the verses refer—an interesting person, anything but kindly treated by fate. She was Signora Enrica Barile; her husband had taken the fancy of altering his name to Filopanti, so she was called Signora Filopanti. Her husband (whom I never saw) had some pretensions as an Italian patriot, an adherent of Mazzini and Garibaldi—the latter indeed, in his *Memoirs*, has spoken of him very highly. He also dabbled in the doctrine of metempsychosis, and would have it that Dante and Beatrice were reincarnated in himself and his wife. The general love of humankind which impelled him to rename himself as Filopanti was, unfortunately, unpropitious to a normal affection for his spouse; so after a while he gave her notice that she had better look out for some separate means of subsistence. She came to London—a very agreeable bright-natured lady, still perhaps under thirty, personable and comely, and not far from handsome—of course, as the poem shows, eminently Italian in character and manner. It was through Mrs. Bell Scott that our family knew her. Signora Filopanti was the lady who, upon Garibaldi's visit to London in 1864, delivered a brief and extemporized harangue to him in public, as he stood before a vast concourse *en route* from the railway station to the heart of London. The Signora tried to establish a teaching connection in London, with only indifferent success. After a time she left, and I heard little or nothing further about her until 1902; she was then living, and in Italy. Here, as in the preceding piece, *En Route*, we can discern the strong Italian sympathies and affinities of Christina.

Husband and Wife, p. 378.—This was published in a book called *A Masque of Poets*; I do not recollect the details. It appears to be the same poem which (as shown in a letter from my brother, 5 January 1866, published in his *Family Letters*) Mr. F. A. Sandys was thinking of illustrating, and for which my brother proposed the title *Grave-clothes and Baby-clothes*.

An Immurata Sister, p. 380.—This poem is constructed out of two compositions which my sister wrote in June 1865, and which she at first associated with the one which is termed *En Route* (see p. 485). The quatrain beginning 'Hearts that die,' and the one beginning 'Sparks fly upward,' were added at some later date; and the one beginning 'The world hath sought' is different from its first form. The title, *An Immurata Sister*, may be open to some uncertainty. The lines are clearly a personal utterance; and I suppose that my sister meant to indicate that, by essential condition of soul, she was not unlike one of those nuns whose rule keeps them severely immured.

Once for all (Margaret), p. 380.—The name Margaret was added when my sister printed this sonnet. The person whom she meant by it was the first Mrs. James Hannay—as I learn from a note pencilled in one of her editions. Presumably the sonnet was written when Mr. Hannay contracted a second marriage.

Song, p. 382.—This song (which in MS. bears a title, *What Comes?*) is the last piece entered in Christina's series of note-books, seventeen in number. As I have said before, precise dates are seldom traceable henceforward.

From Metastasio, p. 382.—These lines form a paraphrastic translation from a lyric ('*Amo te solo*') in Metastasio's *Clemenza di Tito*. I found them as a scrap of MS., pencilled by Christina thus: 'I must have done this for Travenzi, who wanted English words to

set to music.' Traventi was a Neapolitan musical composer and teacher; the date of the translation may be 1868 or rather earlier.

By Way of Remembrance, p. 384.—To this quartett of sonnets I find the date 1870 appended. To one of them, the third, there is (in a different MS.) the precise date '23. 10. 70.'

An Echo from Willow-wood, p. 385.—The title indicates that this sonnet by Christina is based on those sonnets by our brother, named *Willow-wood*, which were first published in 1869. Christina's sonnet may possibly be intended to refer to the love and marriage of my brother and Miss Siddal, and to her early death in 1862; or it may (which I think far more probable) be intended for a wholly different train of events. The verses were printed in *The Magazine of Art*, with an illustration by Mr. C. Ricketts. This was in 1890; but, from the association of the sonnet with *Willow-wood*, I give conjecturally the date 'circa 1870.'

The German-French Campaign, p. 386.—The notice prefixed by the author to these two poems is no doubt correct in saying that they were not intended to express 'political bias.' It is none the less true that she had incomparably more general and native sympathy with the French nationality than with the German.

'*The King of Sheshach*,' p. 386.—It is not every one who has the Bible so much at his fingers' ends as my sister had. The king of Sheshach, a potentate obscure to several of us, is discoverable in the book of *Jeremiah*, ch. xxv.

To-day for me, p. 387.—Dante Rossetti considered this to be among Christina's noblest productions, and he has probably been not alone in that opinion. This is one more instance of her marked success in carrying one rhyme from end to end of a poem.

Venus's Looking-glass, p. 387.—Mr. Cayley sent to my sister a short MS.

poem named *The Birth of Venus*, and soon afterwards, 13 October 1872, another shorter poem on the same argument. Upon the latter poem she wrote the following note: 'The longer of these two poems was sent me first. Then I wrote one which the second rebuts. At last I wound up by my sonnet *Venus's Looking-glass*.' In a copy of her collected *Poems*, 1875, there is also the following note: 'Perhaps "Love-in-Idleness" would be a better title, with an eye to the next one'—i.e. to *Love lies Bleeding*.

Love lies Bleeding, p. 388.—As Christina associated this sonnet with the preceding one, *Venus's Looking-glass*, I have kept them together, dating the second 'circa 1872.' All that I really know of its date, however, is that it got published in 1875.

Days of Vanity, p. 388.—Appeared in *Scribner's Monthly* for November 1872. Thus I am enabled to fix the date as 'before 1873.' Some other cases of the same sort, not always specified in my notes, occur.

Cor Mio, p. 389.—I find this sonnet in my sister's handwriting, endorsed by her 'the original version of my sonnet.' The reference is to No. 18 in the series named *Later Life*. In that version the octave (beginning 'So late in autumn half the world's asleep') is entirely changed, while the sextett remains the same. The present form of this sonnet, being a more directly personal utterance, seems worth preserving.

A Green Cornfield, p. 389.—This and some other compositions are dated by me 'before 1876,' on the ground that they were first printed in the collected volume of 1875.

Valentines to my Mother, p. 391.—I am probably not alone in considering these as very charming compositions of their simple intimate kind. Christina left a pencilled note about them thus: 'These Valentines had their origin from my dearest mother's remarking that she

had never received one. I, her C. G. R., ever after supplied one on the day; and (so far as I recollect) it was a surprise every time, she having forgotten all about it in the interim.' Our mother was born in April 1800, so she was nearly seventy-six when the first Valentine was written; she died in April 1886.

Valentine for 1877, p. 391.—The signature 'C. G. for M. F. R.' means that these verses are spoken as in the person of Maria Francesca (our elder sister) in heaven; she had died in November 1876.

Valentine for 1878, p. 392.—This is marked on the back 'To the Queen of Hearts,' and the like with all the ensuing Valentines.

Valentine for 1883, p. 393.—Here is an evident reminiscence as to the death of Dante Gabriel in April 1882; probably also as to the death of my infant son Michael in January 1883.

Freaks of Fashion, p. 395.—I understand that this was first published in a so-called *Girls' Annual*, 1878. I date it accordingly.

Parted, p. 397.—In 1880 a volume of poems by Mr. C. B. Cayley was privately printed. One of its items was entitled *Moor and Christian*, purporting to be 'taken from a Spanish source,' and expressing the emotion of a Moslem woman severed from her Christian lover. Christina, using the same metre and number of lines, wrote the present composition—of course from a very diverse point of view.

To-day's Burden, p. 397.—Comes from Mr. Hall Caine's compilation, *Sonnets of Three Centuries*, 1882. Date conjectural, but probably not far wrong.

The Key-note, p. 397.—The title is to be understood as meaning that this sonnet was prefixed to the volume *A Pageant and other Poems* (1881), to serve as its key-note.

'*Luscious and Sorrowful*,' p. 398.—

These words, 'Luscious and sorrowful,' are borrowed from a little lyric by Cayley named *Noli me tangere*, which was published in *The Nation*, 1866. In that lyric the epithets are applied to the song of the nightingale. See also the Italian poem (p. 450), headed *Luscious and Sorrowful*.

Johnny, p. 399.—Christina got this pretty anecdote from a book in my possession. The copy is imperfect and titleless, but I have reason to think it is named *Recueil d'Actions Héroïques des Républicains Français*, par Léonard Bourdon. It contains coloured prints by Labrousse, and explanatory text. The precise account given of 'Johnny' is as follows: He was named Locquet, aged eight, and was born in Paris; his 'trait de piété filiale' occurred on 15 pluviôse, an 7. His mother being very ill and almost penniless, he ran off to a wig-maker, priced his fine head of hair at twelve francs, received the money, and handed it to his mother, whose illness however proved rapidly mortal. A soldier then adopted young Locquet, in the Decadary Temple of Gratitude. This 'estimable militaire' refused to allow his name to appear in the narrative.

Hollow-sounding and mysterious, p. 400.—Some readers will recognize this title as being a phrase applied to the sea in a poem by Mrs. Hemans.

Sœur Louise de la Miséricorde, 1674, p. 411.—Perhaps it is superfluous to say that this Sœur Louise was the loving and lovely Duchesse de la Vallière, the mistress of Louis XIV. The year 1674 appears to be that in which she retired into a Carmelite Convent; she did not assume the veil, and become Sœur Louise, until 1675.

Birchington Churchyard, p. 412.—The churchyard in which Dante Gabriel Rossetti was buried in the same month when this sonnet was written.

One Seaside Grave, p. 413.—It would seem to most people that these lines also

relate to Birchington; my belief, however, is that they relate to Hastings, where Charles Cayley lies buried.

Who shall say? p. 414.—The date circa 1884 is presumed, owing to the rough draft of the poem coming on the back of the sonnet, 'Scarce tolerable life,' etc. See the note (p. 469) to that sonnet.

One Swallow does not make a Summer, p. 414.—Was printed in *Time Flies*, but not reprinted in the *Verses*, 1893. No doubt my sister considered that it was not admissible into that series of exclusively devotional poetry. The like course was pursued with a few other items of *Time Flies*.

A Frog's Fate, p. 414.—Was printed as the preceding item. No title was given to the piece by my sister, so I have supplied one.

The Way of the World, p. 415.—Comes from *The Magazine of Art*, July 1894, and must be the latest printed of any verse compositions within my sister's lifetime. Mr. Britten made an illustration to the stanzas. When they were written is quite uncertain to me—possibly at a date even later than that which I have noted.

Brother Bruin, p. 416.—I think this may probably have been written in consequence of a letter I sent, enclosing for Christina a 'history of a maltreated bear, from yesterday's *Daily News*.'

To my Fior-di-lisa, p. 417.—One of the friends who saw my sister most frequently and affectionately in her closing years was Miss Lisa Wilson. Christina sometimes called her Fior-di-lisa (which is the same as Fleur-de-lys). Miss Wilson, who has a graceful touch of her own both in published verse and in painting, presented to Christina in 1892 a little illuminated book of poems by herself; my sister inserted into it the present lines of response.

To-morrow, p. 417.—This little poem

(the title is mine) comes from *The Face of the Deep*; it was not reprinted in the *Verses* of 1893—I hardly see why. It might readily have found a niche in that shrine of sacred song; but, taken singly, it seems more apposite to the section of *General Poems* than to that of *Devotional Poems*.

Sleeping at Last, p. 417.—I regard these verses (the title again is mine) as being the very last that Christina ever wrote; probably late in 1893, or it may be early in 1894. They form a very fitting close to her poetic performance, the longing for rest (even as distinguished from actual bliss in heaven) being most marked throughout the whole course of her writings. I found the lines after her death, and had the gratification of presenting them, along with the childish script of her very first verses *To my Mother*, to the MS. Department of the British Museum.

Poems for Children, and Minor Verse, p. 417.—The term *Poems for Children* explains itself. By *Minor Verse* I designate some few things written by my sister which, while I consider them to be well worthy of preservation, are nevertheless of a slight and casual kind, and hardly fitted for being mixed up among her *General Poems*. In the *Poems for Children* the principal item is the series named *Sing-song* (a title which was proposed by our mother, and immediately adopted, and no doubt liked owing to its origin, by Christina). This series, as it here stands, was compiled by Christina herself, and brought out in 1872 as a separate volume, charmingly illustrated by that fine artist and most estimable and lovable man, Mr. Arthur Hughes. I do not, of course, interfere here with the arrangement adopted by my sister, and therefore the whole of *Sing-song* has to go among the *Poems for Children*. But I cannot help regarding this with some regret, as the series includes various lyrics which, though not unadapted for children, are truly in a high strain of

poetry, and perfectly suited for figuring among her verse for adults, and even for taking an honoured place as such. It may perhaps be as well to specify which are the items that I more especially regard in this light. They are the items which respectively begin (1) 'Dead in the cold, a song-singing thrush'; (2) 'I dug and dug amongst the snow'; (3) 'A baby's cradle with no baby in it'; (4) 'Hope is like a harebell trembling from its birth'; (5) 'Growing in the vale'; (6) 'O wind, where have you been'; (7) 'What are heavy? Sea-sand and sorrow'; (8) 'The summer nights are short'; (9) 'Twist me a crown of wind-flowers'; (10) 'Dancing on the hill-tops'; (11) 'If hope grew on a bush'; (12) 'Under the ivy-bush'; (13) 'Sing me a song'; (14) 'The wind has such a rainy sound'; (15) 'Three little children'; (16) 'Rosy maiden Winifred'; (17) 'Roses blushing red and white'; (18) 'When a mounting skylark sings'; (19) 'Who has seen the wind?' (20) 'O sailor come ashore'; (21) 'The lily has a smooth stalk'; (22) 'Oh fair to see'; (23) 'Is the moon tired? she looks so pale'; (24) 'Good-bye in fear, good-bye in sorrow'; (25) 'Baby lies so fast asleep.' These, however, are not the only compositions which might, without any impropriety (but for the original form of their publication), be transferred to the class of *General Poems*.

Sonnets written to Bouts-rimés, p. 417.—Our brother Dante Gabriel and myself were, towards 1848, greatly addicted to writing sonnets together to *bouts-rimés*; most of my verses published in *The Germ*—and this remark applies not to sonnets alone—were thus composed. Christina did not do much in the like way; but, being in my company at Brighton in the summer of 1848, she consented to try her chance. Like her brothers, she was very rapid at the work. The first sonnet in this present series was done in nine minutes; the ninth in five. After the Brighton days she renewed this

exercise hardly at all. A few of her *bouts-rimés* sonnets, after the first scribbling of them, were retouched to some, but only a small, extent.

Sonnet vii, p. 419.—This sonnet about a chilly August is certainly not a marked success; but it pictured with some truth the day on which it was written, and I allow it to pass muster.

Sonnet viii, p. 420.—Dante Rossetti, writing on 30 August 1848, said, in relation to one of Christina's *bouts-rimés* sonnets (I am not certain which): 'Her other is first-rate. Pray impress upon her that this, and the one beginning 'Me-thinks the ills of life' [*i.e.* No. 8], are as good as anything she has written, and well worthy of revision.'

The Plague, p. 420.—Dante Rossetti's letter above mentioned says of this sonnet: 'I grinned tremendously over Christina's *Plague*, which however is forcible, and has something good in it.'

Sonnets xa, b, and c, pp. 420, 421.—The sonnet marked *c* was, like 1 to 9, written at Brighton. At a later date—1850, or perhaps earlier—Christina wrote the prose story for girls entitled *Maude* (published in 1897). An incident in this story is the competition of three young ladies composing *bouts-rimés* sonnets; *c* is pronounced to be the best of the three. The sonnet *a* (it will at once be observed) is not a true sonnet at all, having lines of unequal length. This was, of course, intentional on Christina's part, to mark the inaptitude of the young lady who is supposed to have indited *a*. None the less I give the three sonnets together, as showing how readily Christina could utilize the same rhymes for three entirely distinct lines of thought or subject. Two of the phrases in *c* are thus commented in *Maude*: 'I have literally seen a man in Regent Street wearing a sort of hooded cloak with one tassel. Of course every one will understand "the Bason" to mean the one in St. James's Park.'

To Lalla, p. 421.—This was a pet name given to Henrietta Polydore, daughter of our Uncle Henry. The name was her own baby invention, I think. She became consumptive, and died in America in 1874, aged about twenty-eight.

Two Enigmas, p. 422.—The answer to the first of these enigmas is 'Jack.' It was published in a little pocket-book named *Marshall's Ladies' Daily Remembrancer* for 1850, and must apparently (according to the conditions laid down) have been sent in before June 1849. One copy of the *Remembrancer* was awarded as a prize to the authoress; some other more admired contributors received two copies. The second enigma means 'Punch,' which was another of the subjects for the *Remembrancer* of 1850. This second enigma has reached me only in a manuscript copy made by one of our aunts.

Two Charades, p. 422.—The first means 'Candid,' the second 'Proserpine.' The latter was published in the *Remembrancer* aforementioned. There was another unpublished charade, *Ægisthus*; but I have not thought it deserving of type.

Portraits, p. 423.—This warm-hearted though light effusion is meant for myself in the first stanza, and for Dante Gabriel and myself in the last. There used to be an intermediate stanza, characterizing *him*; it is torn out (by his rather arbitrary hand, beyond a doubt), and I do not remember its terms. Many readers now will agree with me in thinking this a great pity. A laudatory phrase or two regarding myself ought possibly to have induced me to exclude the verses, but I cannot make up my mind to do that.

Charon, p. 423.—These sportive lines take their cue, of course, from the old song, 'In my cottage near the wood.' They tickled our sister Maria uncommonly. I had totally forgotten them; Christina on her deathbed (9 October 1894) happened to recite them to me—

for she was often extremely conversible up to and beyond that date, spite of her pain and languor—and I wrote them down from her lips. When first published (1896), the verses were entitled by me *Near the Styx*; but I now gather that Christina's own name for them was *Charon*.

The P. R. B. (1), p. 424.—These lines were sent to me in a letter from Christina (then settled with our parents at Frome, Somerset), saying: 'This morning I commenced a remarkable doggerel on the P. R. B.,' etc. And then, after copying out the lines, 'You may guess that at this point of my letter I came to a stand, from the extra finish bestowed on the three last asterisks.' For a few remarks on the substance of the lines, see the following note.

The P. R. B. (2), p. 424.—Was first published in my *Memoir* of Dante G. Rossetti, 1895. The sonnet was written soon after the election of Millais as A.R.A. The allusions to Woolner, then in Australia; Holman-Hunt, who was projecting to visit Egypt and Palestine; Dante Rossetti, who had ceased to exhibit his paintings; and Stephens, who had scarcely come forward as an exhibiting artist at all, can be readily understood. The allusion to myself is less perspicuous. It means that I, as art-critic of *The Spectator*, abused in that paper my fellows in the Præraphaelite Brotherhood, and that no one heeded my reviews. This joke was not historically true; I upheld, with such vigour as was in me, the cause of the Præraphaelites, and my articles, being at first solitary in that tone of criticism, passed not wholly unobserved.

Winter, p. 425.—Mr. Swynfen Jervis, a friendly acquaintance of our father, wrote a quatrain and a half entitled *Sir Winter*; and he appears to have got Christina to complete the little poem. Christina finished quatrain two, and wrote five others. The third of these five reverts to the idea of 'Sir Winter'; so I omit it, as being extraneous to the

character of her own composition : it has no poetical value.

Love's Name, p. 425.—This small ditty is introduced into the prose tale named *Commonplace*, finished in 1870, and published in the same year. It is supposed to be sung by certain young ladies in Greek costume, enacting a charade upon the word 'Love-apple.'

Golden Holly, p. 426.—This trifle, owing to its associations of old and uninterrupted friendship, I was unwilling in 1896 to omit : and I know now that I ought not to have omitted it, for Mr. Swinburne pronounced it an excellent thing. It was addressed to Holman [Holly] Frederic Stephens, then a little boy, son of our constant friend, Frederic George Stephens (one of the seven members of the 'P. R. B.'). Tennyson once saw the child in the Isle of Wight, and pronounced him (not unreasonably) to be 'the most beautiful boy I have ever seen.' Mr. Stephens senior, in sending me the verses at my request, wrote that they refer 'to H. F. S.'s frequent pet name of "The Golden Holly," given because of the brightness of his long hair, as well as his birthday being on October 31. He had sent a tea-rose to C. G. R.'

Sing-song, p. 426.—The items of this series continue down to the one which begins *Lie a-bed* (p. 443). In the MS. of *Sing-song* Christina made a series of pen-and-ink sketches—slight and primitive of course, but not without suggestiveness. The MS., after lying *perdu* for a long time, has returned to my possession.

Rhymes Dedicated to the Baby who suggested them, p. 426.—The baby son of Professor Arthur Cayley of Cambridge, the celebrated mathematician. The lines, 'I know a baby, such a baby,' were, I think, intended for this dedicatee.

Kookoorookoo—Kikiri-kee, p. 426.—I may perhaps be pardoned for saying that these poultry-noises form a reminiscence from Christina's own childhood.

Our father was in the habit of making the noises to amuse his bantlings.

Willie Wee, p. 441.—This was my mother's pet name for me in childhood ; a second reminiscence.

An Alphabet, p. 443.—This was printed in 1875, with some woodcuts, in some magazine ; the headline of the pages is *For Very Little Folks*, which may or may not be the title of the magazine itself. It must be an American publication, as the verses are headed *An Alphabet from England*.

Hadrian's Death-Song Translated, p. 444.—In 1876 Mr. David Johnston, of Bath, formed the project of collecting various translations of the famous lines—'Animula vagula blandula,' etc., and issuing them in a volume, which was privately printed. He looked up old translations, and invited new ones. Christina became one of his contributors, also our sister Maria and myself ; Christina making an Italian as well as an English translation (see p. 453).

My Mouse, p. 444.—This was not a 'mouse' in the ordinary sense, but a 'sea-mouse.' Mr. Cayley had picked it up on the seashore, and presented it to my sister, preserved in spirits. The sea-mouse was with her to the end, and may remain with me to the end ; its brilliant iridescent hues are still vivid. The scientific name of this creature is *Aphrodita aculeata* ; hence the allusion to 'Venus.'

A Poor Old Dog, p. 444.—My sister was a very staunch supporter of the Anti-Vivisection Movement. In a letter to our brother (dated perhaps in 1879) she sent the present verses, with the following remarks : 'There has just been held a fancy sale at a house in Prince's Gate for the Anti-Vivisection cause, and, having nothing else to contribute, I sent a dozen autographs as follows [then come the verses]. Of these, nine on the first day fetched 2s. 6d. or 3s., while one even brought in 10s. ! The remaining

three, I hope, were disposed of on the closing day.'

To William Bell Scott, p. 444.—These verses were sent to Mr. Scott in acknowledgment of a copy of his volume, *A Poet's Harvest-Home*, issued in April 1882. The reference to 'a heavy old heart' has no doubt to do with the death of Dante Rossetti, 9 April 1882. The verses were first published in Mr. Scott's *Autobiographical Notes*.

Counterblast on Penny Trumpet, p. 444.—These rather neat lines are entirely out of my sister's ordinary groove, which fact (trifling as they are) makes me the more unwilling to leave them out. They stand signed 'C. G. R. : see *St. James's Gazette*, 21 July 1882 : motive, a Poem.' I infer (for I have not been at the pains of looking up the *St. James's Gazette*) that that newspaper contained some effusion censuring Mr. Bright for having quitted the Ministry after the bombardment of Alexandria, and also censuring Mr. Gladstone for continuing in the Ministry. My sister knew and cared next to nothing about party politics (apart from questions having a religious bearing); in all her later years, however, her feeling leaned more towards the Conservative than the Liberal cause.

Mole and Earthworm, p. 445.—Here the title is mine. The lines were published in *Time Flies*, but not reproduced in the *Verses* of 1893, where they would have been quite inappropriate.

To Mary Rossetti, p. 445.—These slight lines were addressed to my daughter Mary, probably when aged from five to six.

What will it be? p. 445.—This snatch of verse, and the five following, come from *The Face of the Deep*; they were omitted from the *Verses* of 1893, presumably as being too slight to figure apart from their context. In each instance, except the third, the title is added by me.

Versi, p. 446.—In 1851-52 some young ladies (mostly living in the Regent's Park neighbourhood) had a fancy for getting up a little privately-printed magazine, which was termed *The Bouquet from Marylebone Gardens*. My sister was invited to contribute, and she consented to do so, writing always in Italian. Each contributor adopted some floral name as a signature; Christina was 'Calta.' These *Versi*, and also the following two compositions, come from this rather obscure source. Christina's principal contribution was in prose, not verse—a *Corrispondenza Familiare* between two supposed young ladies, Italian and English, the former being at school. There are eight of these letters, rather neat performances in their way; and, no doubt, others would have followed but for the early decease of the magazine, the withering of the *Bouquet*.

Nigella, p. 447.—In the *Corrispondenza* above named these verses are introduced as being written by the Italian damsel to accommodate her English friend, who had been asked to produce some Italian lines for a lady's album.

Chiesa e Signore, p. 447.—These lines appear in a scrap of MS. which is thus inscribed: 'Written out at Folkestone 6 August 1871, but date of composition not recollected by C. G. R.' I infer that the date of composition was then rather remote, perhaps towards 1860.

Il Rosseggiar dell' Oriente, p. 447.—For any quasi-explanation as to these singularly pathetic verses—'Love's very vesture and elect disguise,' the inborn idiom of a pure and impassioned heart—I refer the reader to the Memoir. The verses were kept by Christina in the jealous seclusion of her writing-desk, and I suppose no human eye had looked upon them until I found them there after her death.

Si rimanda la Tocca-caldaja, p. 448.—The phrase here, 'Se pur fumar nol puoi,' sounds odd. The lines were

written in reply to other lines by Cayley named *Si scusa la Tocca-caldaja*. His final line contains the phrase, 'S'ei mi fumma,' and hence Christina's words in reply.

Blumine risponde, p. 448.—In 'Blumine' the reader will recognize a name used by Carlyle in *Sartor Resartus*.

Lassuso il caro Fiore, p. 449.—The main topic in this little poem must have some relation to what is touched upon in No. 3 of the series.

Per Preferenza, p. 451.—To the first of these stanzas Christina has written the word 'Supposto'; to the second, 'Accertato'; to the third, 'Dedotto.' There must have been in her head some whimsical notion of logical sequence, or what not. I can understand it to some extent, without discussing it.

L' Uommibatto, p. 453.—Christina took it upon her to Italianize in this form the name of the *Wombat*, which was a cherished pet animal of our brother. It will be understood that she is exhorting the *Wombat* not to follow (which he was much inclined to do) his inborn propensity for burrowing, and not to turn up in the Antipodes, his native Australia. As a motto to these verses Christina wrote an English distich:—

When wombats do inspire,
I strike my disused lyre.

Adriano, p. 453.—See the note to P. 444.

Ninna-nanna, p. 453.—The following

snatches of Italian verse are translations or paraphrases made by Christina from her own volume *Sing-song*. Our cousin Teodorico Pietrocola-Rossetti first made some translations from that book, whose title he rendered as *Ninna-nanna*; herein I follow his lead. His translations were felicitous. Inspired by his example, Christina made other—and, I conceive, in poetic essentials still better—translations. Readers familiar with *Sing-song* will perceive that numerous compositions in that volume remain untranslated.

Sognando, p. 458.—I give this title to two stanzas which I find written by Christina into a copy of our father's book of sacred poems—*Il Tempo, ovvero Dio e l' Uomo*, *Salterio*, 1843. The copy is one which he gave in the same year to his sister-in-law, Charlotte Polidori; as the latter lived on till January 1890, this copy would only at that date, most likely, have become Christina's property. This consideration and also the look of the handwriting induce me to suppose that the verses were written not earlier than 1890; they would thus be the last Italian verses which my sister produced. She has signed them thus: 'C. G. R., fired by papa's calling this metre difficult'—the metre being the one adopted throughout the whole book *Il Tempo* in its original form. This MS. note might suggest a far earlier date for the lines; but, on the whole, I abide by my own view as just expressed.

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